

LOADED WITH EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

WHAT'S EATING AMIR KHAN?

The British star reveals all about Brook, Mayweather, Pacquiao and Garcia

JANUARY 28 2016 *Every week*

THE WORLD'S BEST FIGHT MAGAZINE

WWW.BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET

BOXING

Plus

**'MY STYLE IS
AGGRESSIVE,
IT'S CRAZY'**

Gennady Golovkin talks to
us during his stay in London



**GEORGE
GROVES
PART III**

Why Shane McGuigan
is the right man to
rebuild him

**THE MOST
DANGEROUS
MAN IN BOXING**

We invade the training camp of
SERGEY KOVALEV as he prepares for war

**CAR CRASH
SURVIVOR**

The hazardous
and hectic life of a
boxing promoter

Since
1909

£3.49 VOL. 72 NO. 04

ISSN 0006-8519



04
9 770006 851210

Exclusive offer – SAVE 25% now at boxingnewsshop.com/mayweather

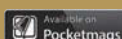
THE ESSENTIAL FLOYD 'MONEY' MAYWEATHER SPECIAL AVAILABLE NOW



EXCLUSIVE OFFER! SAVE 25% on your print copy – only £7.49
Enter promo code **FLOYD25** at boxingnewsshop.com/mayweather

- Accounts of all his fights up to the Saul Alvarez victory
- Tales from his victims who explain how he defeated them
- In the gym with the superstar, including his regime
- Tommy Hearn on how a fight between the pair would go
- And much, much more

ALSO AVAILABLE AS A DIGITAL VERSION – ONLY £6.99





BOXING Contents

January 28, 2016

12 THE 'KRUSHER' FROM RUSSIA

Up close and personal with fearsome light-heavy king Sergey Kovalev

HIGHLIGHTS

- » 16 **KOVALEV-PASCAL II**
We preview the Montreal rematch between two top light-heavyweights
- » 18 **SON OF A LEGEND**
We speak to trainer Shane McGuigan about his star-studded stable of boxers
- » 22 **GROVES IS BACK**
Looking ahead to George's clash with Andrea Di Luisa in Hackney Wick
- » 26 **WALSH'S POWER SURGE**
British featherweight champion Ryan makes a statement in Bethnal Green

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA & ANDREW COULDRIE



HIGHLIGHTS

- » 4 **EDITOR'S LETTER**
An open letter to the WBA
- » 5 **GUEST COLUMN**
Amir Khan on his plans for this year
- » 28 **GARCIA CROWNED**
Danny becomes a two-weight world king after downing Robert Guerrero
- » 32 **OUT OF THE SHADOWS**
Quality light-heavy Bob Ajisafe tells us that he craves an opportunity
- » 34 **MR INVINCIBLE**
Tireless promoter Joe DeGuardia recalls how he cheated death
- » 40 **BATTLING BACK**
Antony Fowler needs a big 2016
- » 46 **60-SECOND INTERVIEW**
'SUGAR RAY LEONARD HAD SKILL AND SPEED. HE COULD DIG DEEP WHEN IT MATTERED MOST'
Miles Shinkwin

DOWNLOAD OUR APP TODAY

For more details visit

WWW.BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET/APPS

BOXING NEWS



Photo: ACTION IMAGES/REUTERS/CHRISTIAN CHARISIUS



OLD TIMER:
Chagaev is the
WBA 'regular'
champ, whatever
that means

OPEN LETTER TO THE WBA

For the attention of World Boxing Association president, Gilberto Mendoza



Matt Christie

@MattCBoxingNews

Editor

LAST week I heard of your plans for a seven-fighter tournament designed to create one WBA heavyweight champion. As a boxing fan who truly adores the sport and its history, I must say, from here at least, this 'tournament' absolutely stinks. You already have a champion. Or as you like to call it, a 'Super' champion. Just remove the other two nonsensical titles, and wallop, job done. No need for a competition.

While the

soon-to-be-finalised rematch between Tyson Fury ('Super' champion) and Wladimir Klitschko is worthy of attention, the remainder of the bouts you propose should be nothing more than eliminators and completely separate entities to the aforementioned sequel. The impending March bout between Ruslan Chagaev ('regular' champion) and Lucas Browne is a decent crossroads contest, but it has no business masquerading as a 'world' title fight, and the fact the winner must meet Fres Oquendo (six years without a noteworthy win) underlines the farcical nature of your plan to crown a king. Yes, it's true that Oquendo has obtained a court order to be involved, but why on earth was he rated in the first place? It doesn't stop there. 'Interim' champion, Luis Ortiz, has been ordered to take on Alexander Ustinov in yet another contest that will be heinously promoted as a

'world' title fight. Then we have to endure the long process of the winners fighting each other before the WBA, the oldest sanctioning body in existence, recognises just one champion. In the meantime, any hopes Fury or Klitschko might have to truly unify the division will be ignored. Unification, by the way, is what every fan wants.

A quicker and easier way to solve the problem of your own making, without inviting the likes of Oquendo and Ustinov into the (complete and utter) mess, would simply be to recognise one champ now. I am yet to see a suitable explanation as to why you continue to create 'Interim' titles when you have an active champion already in place. Nor have I grasped the concept of recognising both 'Super' and 'regular' champions.

The first time your organisation held a tournament like this was in 1967. It was an understandable move. Back then, following Muhammad Ali's removal, there was no champion. Now, though, you have three. Just recognise one, and stop this madness.

This brain-throbbing confusion is not exclusive to the heavyweight division. You have littered each and every weight class with several WBA championship belts that makes the sport at the highest level almost impossible for fans, both old and new, to follow.

In order to retain the relevance your organisation should enjoy, please explain why anyone should take this tournament seriously, and why you recognise up to three world champions per division. It's the least that boxing deserves.

**JUST
RECOGNISE
ONE CHAMP
AND STOP
THIS
MADNESS**

Follow us and keep up to date

@BoxingNewsED BoxingNewsOnline



Cover photography
NAOKI FUKUDA

Coming next week

● **WE'LL** be ringside at the Copper Box Arena, where George Groves hopes a return to form will occur. The bill also features a crucial test for John Ryder against danger man, Sergey Khomitsky.

● **JEAN PASCAL** is convinced he's going to defeat cover star Sergey Kovalev in their Montreal return. We'll be in Canada to see if he can score the upset.

● **KELL BROOK** talks to us about the criticism he's faced since becoming world champion, the sacrifices, and that small matter of Amir Khan.

● **AND** we ride Derry Mathews' incredible rollercoaster as he prepares for the biggest fight of his life.

● **AVAILABLE** to download via iTunes and Google Play from February 2, and the print edition is in stores on February 4.

Available on the
App Store

Available on
Android

Photo: NOAH K. MURRAY/USA TODAY SPORTS



WHO CARES?
Pacquiao [left] and
Bradley square
up again

BROOK DOES NOT WORRY ME

The truth about the negotiations and my thoughts on Mayweather and Pacquiao

K



Amir
Khan

Ex-unified
super-light king

ELL BROOK said he wanted the fight, now he's gone and agreed another fight in March with another unknown opponent. We were negotiating the fight before that, so whether it can happen this summer now is going to be difficult. There's only nine weeks from then until June 4 to promote the fight and train. I'm going to be away in America training then. That's very little time, especially for what will be a big promotion. If Brook gets a cut or injury in his March fight, I can't risk not fighting this summer and trying to find an adequate replacement. I hope it happens this year, but I want to get out fairly soon too, and there are some good options out there for me. [Brook's promoter] Eddie Hearn has spoken with my team and knows what we're after, which isn't something unreasonable. If they truly want the fight like they say publicly – instead of using my name to promote Brook's bum fights – then it can be easily made.

I've faced better fighters than Brook and nothing about him worries me in the slightest. He's got very little experience at world level and is living off his narrow win over Shawn Porter – a fight he was lucky to win. I've always maintained

I would happily fight him, but I'm not going to be dictated too. There are many things that the fans don't see behind the scenes and it's easy for his team to put a spin on things in front of the cameras or say things to make it look like they really want to make the fight happen. I know for sure I will beat him, but it will be on the terms that I'm happy with. When we do agree to fight, what will fans who think I'm scared say then? I want everyone to be treated fairly, even Brook.

As for Floyd Mayweather, I don't think he will stay retired. He was at the fight last Saturday night, just sizing things up. It was his WBC belt which Danny Garcia and Robert Guerrero were fighting over, and then you had a few other fighters in the division there watching like myself and Keith Thurman, so I think he's definitely casting his eyes over things. It won't surprise me if he has his 50th fight in September and looks to regain his belts. I think Garcia is very beatable and can be outboxed for sure. I'm hoping that we can get the rematch on soon. The WBC have ordered that he fights his mandatory, which is me, by June, so there is a very good chance it could happen.

And Manny Pacquiao? It's a load of nonsense that my 'middle men' prevented the fight from happening. All throughout the negotiations Bob Arum and Manny's team were dealing directly with my father, uncle and lawyer. Plus, Freddie Roach said HBO dismissed the fight right away but are seemingly happy to show Pacquiao-Timothy Bradley III instead – a fight which the fans aren't really interested in.

STOP USING MY NAME TO PROMOTE BROOK'S BUM FIGHTS AND MAKE THE FIGHT WITH ME



BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET

WHAT'S HOT ON OUR WEBSITE...



WHO'S NEXT

The date of Haye's next fight looks to have been decided but who will be in the opposite corner?



LIVE BLOG

We bring you all the behind-the-scenes updates from the Copper Box Arena



PACQUIAO SPEAKS

Manny tries to convince us all that he will mean business in the third Bradley showdown



BREAKING NEWS

Fights like Thurman-Porter are being made. Read about them first on our site

SUBSCRIBE
today and get

5 ISSUES
FOR
FREE

call 01371 851888

quote BN5IM114

or visit

BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET





TWEETS

@LIAMBEIFYSMITH
Late Sunday night
drug testers at the
door. #UKantidoping
#cleansport

WBO super-welter
king LIAM SMITH
is prepared to pay
the price for a sport
free of cheats.
Stablemate Anthony
Crolla and Smith's
fellow Liverpudlian
Tony Bellew were
also called upon
that night.

@PAULSMITHJNR
Late night Sunday,
knock at the
door... Just the
Domino's fella.
#CleanSportThough
Liam's older brother,
PAUL SMITH,
answers an
altogether different,
but no less
pressing call.

@GGGBOXING
It was a
pleasure to meet
@EnnerValencia14
this weekend
@WHUMCI.
Surely the pleasure
was the West Ham
footballer's as he
met GENNADY
GOLOVKIN at
Upton Park after
the Manchester
City match at the
weekend?

@SAMHYDE93
Just seen an ugly
ginger kid with loads
of friends outside my
old primary school.
Times have changed!
Unbeaten Sale
cruiserweight
SAM HYDE makes
a rather cruel,
albeit amusing
observation.

@DAVIDTHEWHITER1
Wonder if Guerrero
shaved that goatee
off his chin would
be as good?
Doncaster
heavyweight
DAVID ALLEN with
the question that's
on everybody's
mind concerning
beaten welter
Robert Guerrero.

LETTER OF THE WEEK

CREDIT TO THE SPORT



I WOULD like to praise the way Lenny Daws and his team conducted themselves after the appalling decision by referee Freddy Rafn during the 10th round of Lenny's fight for the vacant European super-lightweight title against Ruben Nieto last month in Carshalton [Daws was controversially disqualified for a perceived headbutt]. Lenny and his team could have ignited an already highly charged atmosphere by reacting in the wrong way, but instead, they showed great dignity. Some people are quick to knock boxers and their behaviour, but Daws and his team were a credit to the sport.

Danny Grantham, Fulham

TIME IS NOT ON ORTIZ'S SIDE

AT the age of 36, Cuban heavyweight Luis Ortiz will have to hurry up if he is to achieve his aim of becoming the world's No. 1 big man. Realistically, out of Tyson Fury, Deontay Wilder and Wladimir Klitschko, the only fighter he may have a chance against is Wilder. Both Fury and Klitschko would easily beat him at the moment, in my opinion.

Ian Owen, Wallington

BRITS TAKING CHARGE

FOR decades, the Americans dominated the heavyweight scene. In more recent times, the Eastern Bloc has been leading the way. In 2016 however, I can see the mighty Brits starting to control the sport's glamour division. Tyson Fury is currently the No. 1 in the division, Anthony Joshua looks like the real deal, and a fit David Haye is still a force to be reckoned with.

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



DIGNIFIED:
Daws [right]
takes a
contentious
defeat with
good grace

As for David Price, when he turned pro, he was put under a lot of pressure to succeed. The buzz built and built until Tony Thompson destroyed the hopes that had unfairly been put on Price's shoulders. His loss to Erkan Teper may yet be changed to a No Contest [following the latter's drug test results], and I still believe he could establish himself as a top heavyweight contender. He's only one punch away from being right back in the mix.

Haydn Williams, Swansea

POUND-FOR-POUND MUSINGS

IN the official *Boxing News* pound-for-pound rankings, Manny Pacquiao is at No. 1, Andre Ward at No. 3 and

Guillermo Rigondeaux at No. 5, while Sergey Kovalev, Saul Alvarez and Gennady Golovkin are at No. 6, No. 7 and No. 9 respectively.

I understand that pound-for-pound lists are extremely subjective, but I believe that Kovalev, Alvarez and Golovkin are sufficiently dominant within their own weight classes, and their recent performances are good enough, to occupy the top spots in the pound-for-pound rankings along with Roman Gonzalez, who is at No. 2. Pacquiao's relatively recent defeats, Ward's inactivity and Rigondeaux's rather limited pro career are negative factors for me.

Stuart Law, Leigh-on-Sea

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE

WE ASKED...



WHO DO YOU THINK ANTHONY JOSHUA SHOULD FIGHT ON APRIL 9?



RICHARD PEARSHOUSE

Dereck Chisora, Hughie Fury, Kubrat Pulev or Robert Helenius. All realistic, and will give an idea of improvement without going crazy and fighting the top guys.

KYLE CORTORREAL

Dominic Breazeale. Big-man fight, for sure. Winner fights Charles Martin for the IBF belt.

CHRIS HOLDEN

He needs to be in the ring with people who have been decent fighters and have a lot of good ring experience, like Chris Arreola or Steve Cunningham.

JON SAXBY

Andriy Rudenko – he took everything Lucas Browne could throw at him and didn't fall over. Or a fast heavyweight like Malik Scott.



IN THE RUNNING:
Chisora [pictured]
could be
Joshua's
next test



HEAD-2-HEAD

DANNY GARCIA

VS

AMIR KHAN

Who wins a rematch between the new WBC welterweight king and his mandated challenger?

TERRIS PRICE

Garcia. Khan can't walk though his counters. Garcia has improved his boxing skills and looked sharp against Robert Guerrero.

ROSS McDONALD

Khan. Garcia is overrated – he's looked poor in his last four fights, against poor opposition.

DAN DODGE

As soon as Garcia clips him Khan will be gone. He will be winning up to that point on the scorecards.

ANDREW SKIDMORE

I'd have to pick Garcia because of Khan's inactivity.

HAMESH RANSA VARENDRA

Danny, because Khan can't take any of the shots Guerrero did.

ADIL ZAALMAN

Khan wins if he fights smart, because Danny is flat-footed.

DAN ROONEY

I give a slight edge to Khan; he's got speed and movement. As long as he uses it and doesn't get sucked into a brawl.

TIM BARRY

Garcia has too much power for Khan.

THE PANEL

WHO IS THE HARDEST PUNCHER IN BOXING?



Frank Warren

Top promoter

It's a toss-up between Sergey Kovalev and Gennady Golovkin. You get a lot of guys who knock people over until they reach a certain level, but those two have been consistent at the top level.



Clinton Woods

Former IBF lightweight champ

There are a few big punchers out there, but I'm going to go with Sergey Kovalev. I'm glad I'm not around in the light-heavyweight division anymore, that's all I can say!



Martin Gethin

Ex-British lightweight king

At this moment in time, I'd say Anthony Joshua. It's not just his power, it's also the way he positions his body when he's throwing a punch. He lines his opponents up and takes them out.



Tommy McCarthy

Cruiserweight prospect

I think it's Deontay Wilder. He's not the neatest boxer, but he's got a huge punch. He may be a bit rough around the edges, but I like him as a personality.

CAN GEORGE GROVES WIN A WORLD TITLE THIS YEAR?

Frank Warren

Top promoter

It's no foregone conclusion. He's had three shots now, he's been stopped twice and I didn't think he deserved the decision against Badou Jack. He has to meet someone who he can get to early. After six rounds, his hopes fade.

Clinton Woods

Former IBF lightweight champ

I hope he does, but I fear he might always come out second best. I think the two Carl Froch fights have taken a lot out of him. He's not really shown enough in his last couple of performances.

Martin Gethin

Ex-British lightweight king

After putting in two good performances against Carl Froch, I'm surprised he hasn't won a world title yet. I think he's good enough to win one this year.

Tommy McCarthy

Cruiserweight prospect

Yeah, I think he can. He's certainly good enough to win one, because he's a world-class fighter. There are world champions out there at the moment who aren't as good as he is.

'HE HAS TO MEET SOMEONE WHO HE CAN GET TO EARLY'

10 COUNT

LIGHT-HEAVY PUNCHERS

Daniel Herbert runs down the biggest hitters at 175lbs

1. ARCHIE MOORE

The "Old Mongoose" had a listed 132 early wins (a record) in his 186-23-10 ledger, including two over famed Canadian hardman Yvon Durelle.

2. BOB FOSTER

The elongated (6ft 3ins tall) Albuquerque sheriff had a fearsome left hook, famously flattening Mike Quarry with it in a 1972 defence.

3. GEORGES CARPENTIER

France's "Orchid Man" won the 175lbs crown with a knockout and even dropped Jack Dempsey in a heavyweight title bid.

4. SERGEY KOVALEV

The Russian "Krusher" has 25 early wins in 29 fights and will no doubt add a few more before he's finished.

5. ROY JONES JR

People rate him for his skills, but what about the right to the body that broke Virgil Hill's rib in 1998?

6. MICHAEL SPINKS

Known primarily for his awkward style, but the "Spinks Jinx" (right hand) concluded eight of his 11 light-heavy title victories inside schedule.

7. YOUNG STRIBLING

Started at feather and ended at heavy, but plenty of his 129 early wins (in a 223-13-14 record) came at 175lbs.

8. EZZARD CHARLES

Before he was heavyweight champ, the "Cincinnati Cobra" showed his venom by knocking Archie Moore among others at 175lbs.

9. FREDDIE MILLS

Bournemouth's popular world title-holder used power and aggression to notch 55 early wins in a 77-18-6 mark.

10. VICENTE RONDON

Overshadowed by Bob Foster, this WBA belt-holder from Venezuela could nevertheless punch: four early wins in as many title fights.

THE WEEK

*What's been going
on in the boxing world
over the last seven days*

TRENDING #FLOYDMAYWEATHER / #SMITHMOHOUMADI / #JOSHUAPARKER / #BROOKKHAN

Photo: STEPHANIE TRAPP/SHOWTIME



MY TIME:
Martin celebrates
victory over Glazkov

MARTIN IMPROVING

WEDNESDAY January 20, 2016

NEW IBF heavyweight champion **Charles Martin**, 29, could still have a decade left at the top, the fighter's co-trainer, and 1984 Olympic champion, Henry Tillman, tells *Boxing News*.

"Charles is the same [as WBC champion, **Deontay Wilder**], he's always improving," Tillman opines.

"Charles has a good eight-10 years in the game. He has handspeed, movement, power in both hands and Charles always had good ring generalship as an amateur. I want him to be busy this year."

The Missouri-born southpaw emerged from obscurity via a gift

shot at the vacant title against **Vyacheslav Glazkov** (whom **Tyson Fury's** failure to fight resulted in him being stripped of the belt). Martin won when Glazkov injured his knee in the third round.

"I think Charles was on his way to a KO victory, it was just a matter of time," says Tillman. "I liked the way he picked his shots real well, he never wasted anything. He wasn't going to go out there and blow himself out, he was pacing himself for four or five rounds."

Glazkov could be out for a year following the incident, ruling him out of an immediate return.

Tillman said of the Ukrainian: "He's a good guy and we hope he can get his career back on track."

FLOYD: NO COMEBACK

THURSDAY January 21, 2016

IN an exclusive interview with talkSPORT, retired superstar Floyd Mayweather Jr, 39, reiterates he has no intention of returning to the ring. The Las Vegas-based star – who will soon be in the UK on an after-dinner tour – claims he is happy to lead other fighters to glory instead.

"As of right now I'm not focused on me, I'm focused on the young fighters under the Mayweather Promotions banner, and trying to help those young fighters become pay-per-view stars," Floyd exclaims.

"I'm not thinking about who I could fight or who I could come out of retirement for, I just want to get back into the sport in a different way.

"I've been fighting my whole life and as a professional I competed at the highest level for 20 years, so it's time to let the young guys take over.

"I will make seven figures a month for the rest of my life. I've made some very smart investments and I'm living very comfortably, my children are going to school and will be going to college soon, and that's what is important to me right now. I'm just blessed way beyond belief."

Photo: JOE CAMPOREALE/USA TODAY SPORTS



GOODBYE:
Mayweather is
happy in retirement

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



MOVING ON: Smith salutes the fans
after beating Fielding and now
vies for the European title

SMITH GETS WBC ELIMINATOR

FRIDAY January 22, 2016

IT'S announced on Twitter by promoter Eddie Hearn that Matchroom's unbeaten British super-middleweight champion **Callum Smith** will challenge European king, **Hadillah Mohoumadi**, on April 2. The bout is set to be staged at 25-year-old Smith's nearby Echo Arena in Liverpool, and will double up as a final eliminator for the WBC title, currently held by **Badou Jack**.

Smith, 18-0 (13), was in devastating form in his most recent

bout – a wild first-round win over fellow Scouser **Rocky Fielding** – and will start as a big favourite over the 35-year-old Frenchman.

Mohoumadi, 20-3-1 (15), went 12 rounds with then-EBU boss, **James DeGale**, in 2012 before eventually claiming the title, which was vacant, when he halted **Mariano Hilario** in eight rounds in May last year.

BURKE GUNNING FOR REVENGE
WOLVERHAMPTON'S **Josh Burke**, 1-0, is readying himself for a long journey to Plymouth to take on

local cruiserweight **Courtney Richards**, 4-5-2 (1), in a revenge mission on Saturday (January 30). The Midlander, 29, lost to Richards as an amateur two years ago.

"It was a very tight contest and it could have gone either way," Burke reports. "I am training extra hard to ensure I turn the earlier defeat around. I have much more experience now and I am sure we will both be bringing it to the table. It will definitely be a great fight."

The six-rounder is one of eight fights scheduled at the Guildhall, and is promoted by Errol Johnson.

“QUOTE OF THE WEEK”

‘I GOT HIT WITH MY TONGUE POSITIONED BETWEEN MY TEETH... I BIT MY DAMN TONGUE ALMOST COMPLETELY IN HALF’

Heavyweight gatekeeper Amir ‘Hardcore’ Mansour churns stomachs while explaining why he lost to Dominic Breazeale

Photo: JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA/USA TODAY SPORTS



BYE-BYE ‘YORI BOY’

SATURDAY January 23, 2016

AT the age of 44, and after 126 outings, Mexico’s Luis Ramon Campas – aka “Yori Boy” – bows out of the fight game after a bizarre farewell bout against fellow veteran, Anthony Bonsante, 45.

Campas was 56-0 when he lost a thrilling slugfest to Felix Trinidad in 1994 but recovered to claim the IBF super-welterweight title three years later. The blood-and-guts brawler remained on the fringes of world class for most of his career, but losses to **Matthew Macklin**, **Hector Camacho Jr** and most recently in 2012, **Les Sherrington**, relegated him to journeyman-cum-gatekeeper status.

The bout with 45-year-old Bonsante, who also declared this would be his final contest, was a clumsy, sometimes exciting, but ultimately farcical affair. The rivals fought on even terms for the first four rounds at the Civic Center, Butte, Montana, before Campas gained control. He decked Bonsante in the fifth, and the American soon started to unravel, losing two points for holding before lifting Campas by the waist in the seventh and throwing him to the canvas.

Campas – 106-17-3 (81) – injured his leg, leaving Bonsante disqualified and in trouble with boxing authorities for his poor sportsmanship. Bonsante apologised to the crowd for his behaviour.

Campas, meanwhile, hobbled to his dressing room. Inglorious indeed.

THIRTY-SIX STITCHES

SUNDAY January 24, 2016

THE day after losing a wild brawl with heavyweight prospect **Dominic Breazeale** [see page 29], 43-year-old veteran **Amir Mansour** explains, in startling detail, how he almost bit off his own tongue off in the midst of the fight. The horrendous injuries he suffered, which also included a fractured jaw, go a long way to explaining why Mansour decided to pull out of a competitive fight before the sixth round.

“I know many of you are wondering what happened,” Mansour says via Facebook. “Around the second round, I got hit with my tongue positioned between my teeth. My mouth piece is fitted for the upper teeth only. I bit my damn tongue almost completely in half. So then my tongue swelled up so bad, I literally couldn’t breathe, not to mention swallowing so much blood. I had been battling a cold, so breathing through my nose wasn’t working. I was suffocating – literally. Got a pretty decent injury to my jaw as well, getting that checked out.”

Mansour also confirms that the wound undergoes a long repair, and along with treatment to his jaw, the fighter spends much of the day in hospital.

“Thirty-six stitches and five hours later, my tongue is back together. What a terrible way to lose a fight,” he laments.

PARKER WANTS ‘AJ’

MONDAY January 25, 2016

UNBEATEN heavyweight prospect **Joseph Parker**, via his promoter Dean Lonegran, calls out British king **Anthony Joshua**.

Two days after posting a one-sided eighth-round stoppage of tough but limited **Jason Bergman** in Apia, Samoa, Lonegran tells *FightNews* they “desperately” want Joshua.

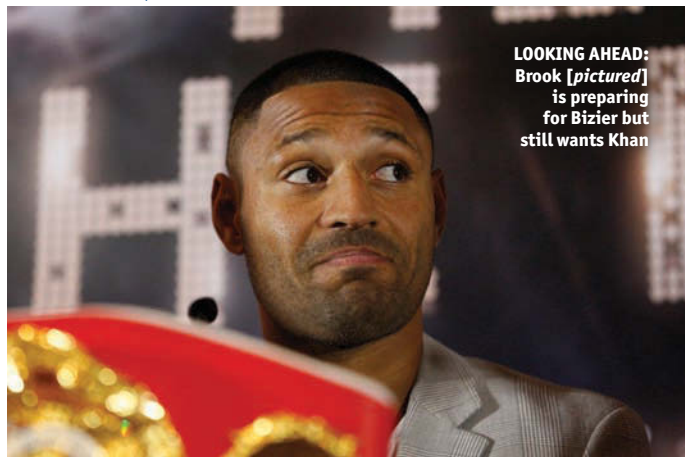
“We’ve put challenges to him,” he says. “I was in England two months ago, I was trying to get a meeting through my boxing connections who know the Hearn camp intimately. Eddie Hearn turned me down flat.”

The accusation was addressed by Hearn on Sky Sports: “I might have got an email saying he was in town and I don’t think I was in town. In the last three days I’ve counted probably six or seven fighters who’ve mentioned ‘AJ’ or called him out.

David Haye, **Tyson Fury**, **Dereck Chisora**, **Malik Scott**, **Dillian Whyte**, **Joseph Parker**. The list goes on and on. The Parker fight is a fight that can happen as long as he keeps winning. With respect, the level of opponents he has fought hasn’t been up to the standard of Joshua’s but I rate Parker. I think it’s a good fight.”

Parker’s win over Bergman lasted longer than expected as the American put up sturdy resistance despite being dropped in rounds two and seven. A hellacious right-left concluded matters.

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/CRAIG BROUGH



HE WHO DARES...

TUESDAY January 26, 2016

KELL BROOK is back in battle mode and preparing to defend his IBF welterweight belt against mandatory challenger, **Kevin Bizier** of Canada, on March 26 at the Sheffield Arena. The 29-year-old is perennially linked to a domestic showdown with bitter rival **Amir Khan**, and Brook tells *Boxing News* he will make sacrifices to ensure the fight happens.

“I’d fight him wherever, we need to sit down and talk but I’m flexible as long as he’s in the ring with me, the fans can get to the fight and the respect’s there for me bringing that world title,” Brook explains. It was reported that Khan was demanding 80 per cent of the purse.

“The politics side, I try to keep away from it, but there’s no way the champ is taking only 20 per cent. Let’s be realistic, we can all agree. I’d do 80-20 for the winner. I’d sign for that,” Brook declares.

The champion also insists he is happy to go straight back into camp after the Bizier fight to secure a tentative summer date at Wembley Stadium against Khan.

“I’ll already be fit, it’s about keeping them tools sharp. I know Wembley is booked, pencilled in for June 4. It’s maybe not the best for me but it keeps that Wembley date there.”

*Get next week’s *Boxing News* for the in-depth interview with Brook.

IN BRIEF

LEARNING CURVE

CHINGFORD super-featherweight prospect **Boy Jones Jr** gets his 2016 under way with a six-rounder at the Prince Regent Hotel in Chigwell on February 3.

Jones, 5-0-1 (3), is still only 19 and turned pro nearly one year ago.

"I had no amateur fights – I did the other code [unlicensed]," he points out. "I've had only 10 fights in my life while others have had hundreds of amateur bouts."

The goal for this year is to accumulate ring time rather than reach a particular level.

"I want to get more experience," says Jones [below], whose real name is Ben (he had to change it because the BBBofC had already licenced Crawley super-feather **Ben Jones**).

"I'm only in the second year of my job, I'm still doing the foundation. I want to learn from different styles of opponents. If I see the chance of a knockout I'll go for it, but I want to get rounds under my belt."

With Andy Ayling as his manager and Frank Warren his promoter, Jones should see plenty of action. Trainer is Dominic Negus, with whom he works at the Sparta 300 gym in Chingford, although he recently spent three weeks at a camp in Murcia, Spain.

"It was the nuts," enthused Jones. "I trained like a champion. I've been sparring super-lightweights Sanjeev Sahota, who's sorting out his pro licence, and Liam Dillon. I spar all styles."

The draw came in his third pro outing against Stockport's **Jamie Quinn**, but Jones is philosophical about it: "Everybody said it was a robbery. I'm not really bothered about a rematch because I've moved past that now."

DANIEL HERBERT



Photo: WEST HAM UNITED



FOOTBALL CRAZY:
Golovkin [right]
with West Ham
manager,
Slaven Bilic

THE MIGHTY HAMMER

'GGG' talks to
Boxing News
during his
brief visit
to London

MIDDLEWEIGHT terror **Gennady Golovkin** was all smiles as he made a flying visit to London to boost his British profile last weekend. The IBF and WBA Super king – still without an opponent for a proposed April 23 date – visited West Ham United's Upton Park to watch the Hammers draw with Manchester City 2-2, but also found time to talk to *Boxing News* for an upcoming feature, and heaped praise on the teachings of his revered trainer.

"Abel Sanchez opened my eyes to [the] Mexican style [of fighting]; the American style, this is different," Golovkin told us. "A different class, a different school.

The Mexican style is more close, more aggressive, a more crazy fight."

Sanchez was introduced to Golovkin in the winter of 2010. Since then they have worked together at the coach's Big Bear facility in Los Angeles, California. The undefeated Kazakh, 33, believes other Eastern Bloc fighters can benefit from heading west.

"Russian people like more power," Golovkin continued. "Abel opened my

eyes for any style. He said 'This style is better for you because people love it, a big show.'

"Different guys [from the Eastern Bloc] are better going to the United States because United States is the Mecca of boxing, like first class. You are training, sparring with a lot of champions."

Golovkin looked all set to fight his unheralded IBF mandatory, **Tureano Johnson**, before the Bahamian was ruled out with an injury. Another fighter

regularly linked to Golovkin is WBO boss, **Billy Joe Saunders**.

The Hatfield traveller initially declared he wasn't ready for Golovkin after beating

Andy Lee to claim his title in December, though that attitude has changed and it was reported during Golovkin's stay in the UK that Saunders' team – headed by Frank Warren – had turned down a purse of £3m for the showdown, but the promoter told *Boxing News* this figure was unrealistic. Warren declined to go into detail about the talks, preferring to keep negotiations a private affair between the two teams.

'THE UNITED STATES
IS THE MECCA
OF BOXING, LIKE
FIRST CLASS'

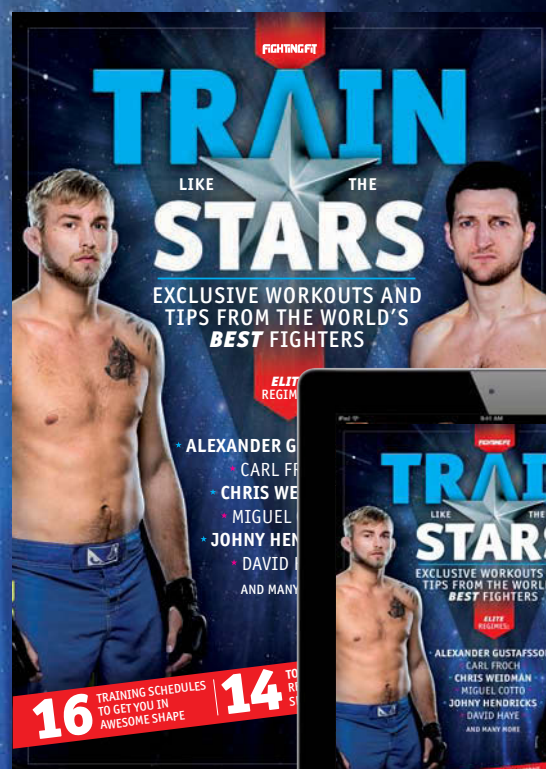
FIGHTINGFIT

TRAIN

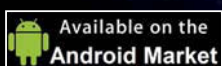
LIKE THE STARS

IN STORE NOW & ON THE BOXING APP

- ★ EXCLUSIVE WORKOUTS FROM 16 OF THE BEST FIGHTERS IN THE WORLD
- ★ FROCH, WEIDMAN, COTTO, GUSTAFSSON, HAYE, HENDRICKS ET AL
- ★ NUTRITION GUIDE FOR BULKING, CUTTING AND MORE
- ★ GEAR ROUND-UP AND REVIEWS FOR BOXING AND MMA
- ★ INTRODUCTION TO CROSSFIT, BJJ AND SAN SHOU



BUY YOUR COPY FOR JUST £9.99
OR DOWNLOAD FOR £6.99



“
**THERE ARE
PEOPLE WHO
NEED MY
SUPPORT.
MY FAMILY
IN RUSSIA IS
STILL HUNGRY**
”

SIMPLE THINGS



Sergey Kovalev is the most fearsome light-heavyweight in the world. **Jeremy C Herriges** attempts to uncover the root of his fury

W

HEN people dream about what it would be like if they were one of the most dominant professional athletes on earth, they might picture a scene imbued with glamour. A scene loaded with million-dollar sports cars, living in vast, sprawling mansions, and

hanging out with a large posse at ritzy, exclusive clubs, popping bottles of Cristal all night long.

This may be a reality for some of the sporting elite, but material wealth doesn't mean a whole lot to Sergey Kovalev. To him, boxing is a means of survival.

Finding Kovalev's training camp in Boca Raton, Florida was not a simple task. I was driving down 24th Street on a sunny day, when my iPhone notified me that I had reached the PAL Gym. I looked around, but saw nothing except some office buildings and garages. I quickly turned down a side street and ended up in an car body shop's parking lot. I couldn't find an address, so I circled around the wrecked cars in the lot, when IBF, WBO and WBA Super world light-heavy champion Kovalev, clad in a black "Krush" sweatsuit, suddenly manifested in front of my car, talking on his phone.

The PAL Gym is in an unmarked stucco warehouse carrying a faded yellow and pink *Miami Vice*-style paint job. While the mechanics in the body shop ►

'KRUSHED':
Pascal is
dropped by
Kovalev in their
March meeting



► work on repairing unfortunate wrecks, next door, Kovalev drips sweat from every pore in the hope of causing disaster and carnage in the ring.

When Kovalev entered the gym after his conversation, we shook hands and exchanged pleasantries, but his appearance and stature were a surprise. Kovalev always seems so physically imposing in comparison to his opposition when watching his fights on television. His physicality, on the screen, appears to overpower those that have stood up to him before ultimately falling. In reality, though, outside the ring Kovalev, barely 6ft, does not look like a fighter. He does not look like a man who is regarded as one of the most dangerous athletes on the planet.

Later in the day, his trainer, John David Jackson, addressed Kovalev's inconspicuousness.

"When you look at Sergey, you don't see it," quipped Jackson. "A lot of guys think, 'I'm gonna beat this guy up.' A lot of opponents have probably thought that. But once he hits you, it's like, 'Oh my goodness. This is unreal power.' It's amazing the power he possesses in his punch."

It makes sense that Kovalev appeared so colossal on TV because his punching power created an aura of invincibility. Against every man he's fought, he's been superior. On paper, there's one imperfection on Kovalev's record – a draw against Grover Young in 2011 – but that's misleading. Before Kovalev jumped in the ring to begin his workout, the light-heavyweight king discussed the blot on his ledger.

"I have, on my record, one draw," stated Kovalev. "I punched him over the ear, but he showed to the referee that I punched him on the back of the head."



As Kovalev explained the injustice, he firmly placed his clenched fist against my skull, right where he hit Young: "The referee wasn't experienced. He should have started counting. It was a technical draw. He got easy money. This guy understood he couldn't win."

It was a local boxing trainer, also named Sergey, who noticed young Kovalev playing with friends in the street. He approached Kovalev about giving boxing a try, and that's when Sergey embarked on his pugilistic journey. Because of his slight physique as an adolescent, the local boxing trainer made comparisons between Kovalev and a certain Detroit legend.

"I was tall and very skinny," said Kovalev. "He told me I should fight like Tommy Hearns."

He started showing Kovalev videos of Hearns' fights, and tried to get him to mimic the "Hitman's" style.

Kovalev and Hearns both punch like hell, yet there is an elegance about Kovalev which isn't always obvious

**DON'T BE
FOOLED:**
Kovalev may
not look like a
brute, but he
is a monster
inside the ring

Photo:
ACTION IMAGES/
PETER CZIBORRA



in his fights. Like Hearn, he is a brilliant boxer, one whose skill is often lost, or rendered redundant, by his blazing power. His agility, speed of foot, intelligent boxing and numbing punching power make Kovalev a true master of his trade.

Many people believe that Jean Pascal can't win against Kovalev this Saturday (January 30). He put up a spirited fight in their first meeting in March, but he was outgunned, and eventually failed like everyone else (rsf 8). But Kovalev displays respect for his rival, from a boxing standpoint at least.

"From [a scale of] one to five, he's a four," said the 32-year-old. "He's dangerous. I should be very cautious in my next fight. He has a punch. I felt like three shots [in the first fight]. Pascal is a good puncher."

Kovalev expressed views on Pascal's strengths as a fighter, but hearing what he deemed to be his opponent's biggest weakness was a surprise.

"His main mistake was that he doesn't respect anybody," growled Kovalev.

Pascal's issue isn't physical, Kovalev believes, but spiritual and mental. Pascal's lack of respect for the Russian's skills, and his heart, may have cost him in their first meeting. As Kovalev explained further, contempt was clear in both his expression and words.

"He still says a lot of bad things to my team," Kovalev said. "I will never sit with him at a table. He's crazy. Nothing will change my opinion of him. He is the lowest."

It's not uncommon for boxers to dislike each other going into a bout, but often, bad blood is contrived in order to boost ticket sales. That's not the case here. Kovalev's eyes prove that. But the thunderous puncher, who has beaten 25 of his 28 victims inside the distance, will not fight angry.

"Behind me and around me, there are people who believe in me and help me and who need my support," said Kovalev, softening slightly. "My family in Russia is still hungry, living in poor apartments. Right now there's not enough money to help everybody. My family is huge: three uncles, two aunts, 15 or 16 cousins, two younger brothers, one older sister."

Family has always been the primary motivation behind Kovalev's boxing career. When he was just

an 11-year-old boy growing up in the industrial city of Chelyabinsk, Russia, the desire to help better his family's financial situation is what made him decide to take up boxing.

Life in Chelyabinsk was harsh. Kovalev's family lived, and continues to live, in a state of poverty. Many members of his family struggle to make ends meet and live in substandard conditions. The recent downturn in Russia's economy has made matters worse. As an adult, Kovalev still combats the same economic conditions that have surrounded his family since he was a child.

"I agreed to do boxing because we didn't have money for the lights," the fighter recalled. "I believed that only boxing can help me to get money for my family. I just had my dream to make life better."

The more Kovalev discusses his family, the more candid he becomes.

The stories of his family's plight in Russia are like something from a Dostoyevsky novel. Currently, Kovalev's father is unwell in a Russian hospital, scheduled to have surgery due to complications with diabetes. Kovalev believes that his father developed the condition because of the stress he had to endure due to a past family tragedy.

"My father is in the hospital to get an operation for his

leg," Sergey said sorrowfully. "My uncle died in a fire and my father tried to save him. My father has stress after this and he got diabetes from this. He's having his seventh operation. His wounds don't close, which makes it hard."

During this painful time for Kovalev and his family, he wishes his mother were with him in the US so he could comfort her, but she has had a lot of difficulty entering the country.

"My mum, for the third time they [the US government] didn't approve her visa," he explained. "I want to bring her here just to watch my fight. They didn't approve a visa. I will bring my mum to Canada. Canada approved the visa. She will be at my fight."

And there it is. For some athletes, it's fast cars. For Sergey Kovalev, one of the most destructive of them all, it's all about his family. In an era of excess, Kovalev is driven only by raw survival. **BN**

GAME OF WAR: Kovalev swallows some hard shots from Pascal [above], but retains his world titles [above, left]

Photos:
ERIC BOLTE/
USA TODAY SPORTS

“
**NOTHING WILL
CHANGE MY
OPINION OF
JEAN PASCAL.
HE IS THE LOWEST**
”

PREVIEWS

Previewing the best
upcoming fights
around the world

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ GOOD ★★★★★ FAIR ★★★★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

The star ratings indicate how well the writer believes the fighters match up, the fight(s)' contextual significance, and how good the fight(s) will be

PHASE ONE

Paul Wheeler
previews the
first stage of
Kovalev's
three-step
2016
masterplan

BEST IS YET TO COME:
Kovalev celebrates
but fans are eager to
see him in against
threatening rivals

★★★★★ MAIN EVENT

★★★★★ UNDERCARD



MAIN EVENTS, the promoters that handle IBF, WBO and WBA Super world light-heavy ruler **Sergey Kovalev**, have a three-step masterplan mapped out for the fearsome Russian this year. The second and third stages of this blueprint include a unification clash with WBC titlist Adonis Stevenson in the summer, followed by an autumn superfight with pound-for-pound-listed Andre Ward. However, before Kovalev can think about potential tussles with Stevenson and Ward, he must navigate phase one – a rematch with Haitian-Canadian slugger **Jean Pascal**.

This Saturday (January 30), live on BoxNation (UK) and HBO (US), Kovalev-Pascal II takes place at the Bell Centre in Montreal – the site of the first fight – on a show staged by both Main Events and Pascal's promoter, Interbox. All three of Sergey's belts will again be on the line.

Their opening bout last March provided thrills and spills aplenty, as both men relentlessly pounded away at one another. Despite being a clear underdog beforehand, Pascal made a good go of it. The challenger caused Kovalev some problems with his unorthodox, booming blows, particularly in the fifth round. Nevertheless, the steely champion remained unruffled throughout, and refused to yield control of the contest. Ahead by 68-64 on all three of the judges' scorecards, Sergey clumped his rival with a brace of hefty right hands in the eighth frame to force the referee's intervention.

Pascal vehemently disputed the stoppage, but it seemed a fair decision.

Since their entertaining scrap 10-and-a-half months ago, Kovalev, 28-0-1 (25), and Pascal, 30-3-1 (17) 1NC, have fought once each, both on the same bill in Las Vegas in July. While Sergey emphatically triumphed in a routine mandatory defence against outgunned Nadjib Mohammedi (ko 3), Jean's victory over then-unbeaten Yunieski Gonzalez was far from straightforward. After 10 barnburning sessions, Pascal was awarded a controversial unanimous decision.

The 33-year-old then decided that a change was in order. He parted ways with his long-time coach, Marc Ramsay, and teamed up with Freddie Roach at the Wild Card gym in Hollywood. Pascal believes his decision will be vindicated with a revenge win against Kovalev.

"Freddie is a great coach," Pascal stated.

Photos: ERIC BOLTE/USA TODAY SPORTS

**'I DON'T HAVE
ANY PLANS FOR
THE FIGHT. A
BOXING MATCH IS
A STREET FIGHT'**





YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR HAT ON:
Pascal is not expected to take
Kovalev's crown in the sequel



EXPERT VIEW

**KIERAN
MULVANEY**
REPORTED ON
FIRST KOVALEV-
PASCAL FIGHT
FOR BN

KOVALEV is an almost complete fighter – terrific jab, good boxing skills, and of course, thunderous punching power.

If he has a weakness, it's an occasional tendency to pull straight back from punches, which is what allowed Pascal to clock him with some strong shots, and even rock him in their first fight. Pascal has an unorthodox but effective style, and fast hands with good power, but he's had issues with stamina and endurance. His performance in his somewhat fortunate win over Yunesky Gonzalez last time out suggests that maybe Kovalev took something out of him. Kovalev to win by mid-rounds KO.

TALE OF THE TAPE

SERGEY KOVALEV	JEAN PASCAL
@KrusherKovalev	@jeanpascalchamp
Apr 2, 1983/32	DOB/AGE Oct 28, 1982/33
Los Angeles, CA	HOMETOWN Laval, Quebec
Russian	NATIONALITY Haitian-Canadian
6ft	HEIGHT 5ft 10 1/2ins
72 1/2ins	REACH 72ins
28-0-1 (25)	RECORD 30-3-1 (17) 1NC
Orthodox	STANCE Orthodox
Jul 25, 2009/26	DEBUT/AGE Feb 3, 2005/22
86	KO PERCENTAGE 49
7	WORLD TITLE FIGHTS 8
1-0	RECORD AT BELL CENTRE 9-2 1NC

"He sees things that other people can't see. I'm not starting from scratch, as I have many years of boxing behind me. We're just tweaking some small mistakes in order to deliver big changes."

The news of Pascal's revised training set-up has done little to perturb Kovalev. The cold-blooded "Krusher", who trains under the guidance of John David Jackson in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, is typically unfazed.

"Pascal has good motivation and a new coach, but I'll be ready for anything," Sergey said. "I don't have any plans for the fight. A boxing match is a street fight – no rules. If he brings something better, it doesn't matter."

With victories over notable names in Bernard Hopkins (ud 12), Nathan Cleverly (rsf 4) and Gabriel Campillo (rsf 3) adorning his résumé, Kovalev is regarded as one of the best fighters in the world today. In addition to his destructive punching power, the Los Angeles resident is an intelligent and technically gifted boxer, who honed his skills over the course of an extensive amateur career. Patient, precise and

composed, the rugged 32-year-old is well-conditioned, and rarely wastes energy. Possessing impressive variety and footwork, as well as a solid chin, Sergey leads with a stiff jab to the head and chest, and throws accurate combinations and punishing overhand rights. Despite being floored in the past, he has never been in serious peril. Pascal can also

take a punch. In fact, the only time he was ever dropped was during the third round of his fight with Kovalev, following a clean right hand.

A 2004 Olympian and 2002 Commonwealth Games gold medallist, Jean has mixed with a number of top-class foes, including Lucian Bute (w ud 12), Bernard

Hopkins (twice – d md 12 and l ud 12), Chad Dawson (w td 11) and Carl Froch (l ud 12). An aggressive pressure-fighter, the former WBC 175lb king swarms his opponents with a vast array of unconventional strikes. Boasting good upper-body movement, the muscular athlete is fast and strong. As an inhabitant of nearby Laval, Pascal will enjoy vocal support at the Bell Centre, where he has

UNDERCARD

THE co-feature sees Russian welter Dmitry Mikhaylenko, 20-0 (9), take on late sub Karim Mayfield, 19-2-1 (11), of San Francisco, over 10 rounds. Ray Robinson was the original opponent, but a car accident ruled the Philadelphia southpaw out.

With three of British boxing's most recognisable names in his stable, Shane McGuigan is a trainer on the rise, writes George Gigney



IN DEMA

A

T 27, Shane McGuigan, son of former world featherweight champion Barry McGuigan, is entering the years of a fighter's prime. Shane however did not follow in his

father's footsteps. Instead, he is a trainer and is looking at the biggest year of his career to date.

He is preparing best friend and IBF super-bantamweight champion Carl Frampton for his colossal unification fight with WBA Super world title-holder Scott Quigg in February, having also recently joined forces with top super-middleweight George Groves and heavyweight crossover star David Haye. His gym in Battersea is also the base of budding prospects like Conrad Cummings and Josh Taylor.

McGuigan is, without a doubt, one of the UK's top trainers and that is saying something, considering the likes of Joe Gallagher, Adam Booth, Dave Coldwell and Gary Lockett all operate on these shores.

However, his relative youth – and the fact he has such an influential father – still draws reservations from some observers.

"People are very quick to judge. When I first started training Frampton, people said, 'Oh, he's only got this job because of his dad'. The fact is, dad would not have put Frampton in my hands if he didn't think I was capable of doing a good job," McGuigan told *Boxing News*.

"People are born fighters or born coaches, they have their place in the world. My place is definitely in coaching, I can read the game well and I'm a good teacher.

"People are starting to take note. Now I'm working with the likes of David and George, people are thinking, 'OK, it's not just a little craze, he's not just getting lucky with Frampton'."

McGuigan's role in Frampton's last outing also went some way to proving his worth as a taskmaster. Carl found himself in unfamiliar territory when unheralded Alejandro Gonzalez decked him twice in the opening round last July, but Shane was able to keep his man focused and the Northern Irishman earned a unanimous decision.

"Although it was probably Frampton's worst performance, I think the boxing >



ND



STAR PUPIL: McGuigan [right] puts Frampton through his paces and [below] celebrates victory

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/JASON CAIRNDUFF



“
PEOPLE ARE NOW
THINKING, 'OK, IT'S
NOT JUST A CRAZE,
HE'S NOT JUST
GETTING LUCKY
WITH FRAMPTON'
”



McGUIGAN ON GROVES

GEORGE [below] has fought for three world titles – twice against a great champion in Carl Froch, and he dropped a split decision to Badou Jack where it just didn't go his way out there. It could have gone his way. That's what he felt was so frustrating about it, he knows he could have done better and he knows the camp could have been better. For me, he's brilliant to work with because he's soaking everything up. George is a great, great fighter and he's absolutely flying in the gym. I honestly think he'll win a world title.



► public probably thought it was my best performance because I was able to turn him round and get him to dominate after having a terrible first round. Now, I'm getting a lot more respect in the boxing community, definitely."

The relationship between Shane and Carl has been integral to both their success. They met in the amateurs and quickly struck up a friendship, with Barry then guiding Frampton into the professional ranks as his manager.

Although Shane did not officially join Frampton's corner until 2011, and only became head trainer prior to his European title fight with Kiko Martinez in 2013, he had a central role in the Ulsterman's camp from very early on.

"Joe Gallagher said recently that I got handed a European champion. He's threatened by me and other people are threatened by me and that's why they try and downplay it," he claimed.

"The fact is, I was working with Carl since his second fight. He used to come over from camp, from Ireland, and I would work six to eight weeks before all of his earlier fights but I had no licence so I couldn't be in the corner, I just wanted

PREMIER CORONATION: Frampton [right] fires at Martinez

Photos: ACTION IMAGES

to work with him in the gym. Gerry Storey [Frampton's former trainer] wouldn't travel, so they were over in Belfast. So he was doing literally all of his training over here apart from in between fights when he would be ticking over back home.

"After the Robbie Turley fight I decided to go and get my licence because he was in a reasonably hard fight and was looking out the ring [Shane was sat in the fourth row] and listening to my advice in between rounds, it was a bit of a shambles. So after the fight he said to me, 'Listen mate, I want you to get your licence and train me'."

Shane's transition from team member to team leader was by no means smooth. The day before the Martinez fight – then Frampton's toughest test on paper – Storey walked away and left McGuigan to hold the corner together. His apprenticeship was over.

"Literally right after the weigh-in for the

Martinez fight, Gerry came up to us and told us he wouldn't work with us anymore.

"So we won the European title but at that stage, because I was always in the background, people said, 'Where's he come from?' Carl will tell you, we've been training for a long time.

"Gerry felt he had no input, I think it was a bit spiteful, trying to unravel us the night before a big fight. It left a bitter taste in Carl's mouth. But we came through it with flying colours."

That they did. In arguably his best performance, Frampton stopped the Spaniard in nine scintillating rounds. A year-and-a-half later, Frampton outpointed Martinez but this time for the IBF title on a night Shane describes as one of the best of his life.

That success attracted the attention of Groves and Haye, both of whom required change to revitalise their careers. Haye, in his first contest in three-and-a-half years, decimated the overmatched Mark de Mori inside a round earlier this month, while Groves faces Andrea Di Luisa on Saturday night (January 30) in his first fight under McGuigan.

As an amateur boxer, Shane won over 30 bouts and was a fierce talent, but the constant pressure and comparison to his father eroded Shane's love for the sport for a spell.

"It was always very intense, I'm not going to lie," he said.

"I always really enjoyed the training aspect, behind closed doors. I didn't really like the competition aspect, I don't really like to be in the limelight. I just wanted to do it behind closed doors, but everyone was always



SUPERFIGHT: Quigg [right] squares up to Frampton ahead of their February showdown

pushing me to compete.

"I never really wanted to turn pro and try to replicate what my dad did because he's great in his own right. I didn't want to try and emulate somebody who's already been there and done it, the constant comparison would always be there."

Instead, he moved into training and served an internship under famed strength trainer Charles Poliquin.

That knowledge forms an important part of his role now. Whether it be regular blood tests or measuring body fat, McGuigan ensures his fighters are in peak condition using the latest techniques.

"What works for David might not work for Carl or George, everyone's unique," he opined.

"As a coach, you have to understand people's strengths and weaknesses. If I say, 'No, this is the way we do it,' I'd be shutting myself off. It's the same thing for any other coach, if you say, 'You have to do 500 crunches and do things the way we did them in the 80s,' it shuts people out. You have to go with the times."

While a career as a fighter could have been spent largely in his father's shadow, Shane is clearly blazing his own trail as a trainer. He may be younger than his three most notable fighters, but McGuigan sticks to his philosophy of becoming close with his charges – a mantra Ray Arcel who, at 24, was younger than Shane when he trained his first world champion (flyweight Frankie Genaro in 1923) also believed in. Even if it means spending 16 hours in the gym each day.



PIVOTAL:
Frampton [left]
hooks Turley
but struggles
to impress

"I'm quite a personable sort of lad. I like to get close to my fighters and understand what they're thinking," he said.

"I train them individually. Every single one of my fighters, whether they're a novice or a world champion, are getting the same amount of time and they benefit from it. If I trained them all together it'd be stupid because they're all different.

"I want to know when they're hurt or what look they give when they're under pressure. They have to be open with me and tell me everything they're feeling.

"I always say, 'Is he punching hard?' and we can manipulate things from that. With Carl, I ask him when he takes a shot, 'How did that feel?' and we do it on the sly when the cameras aren't in the corner, but he just gives me a nod or whatever and we have little

codes. That's how close we are, that's how much I understand him as a person."

That kind of intimacy took years to build and it's rare, in this loneliest of sports, for a fighter and trainer to have such a close bond at a young age. Indeed, McGuigan concedes it will require time to build such a rapport with his latest additions.

"Now, working with the likes of George and David, I have to know the same thing and it will take me a while to get the most out of them.

"But they're both open characters and they tell me a lot, so I think I can emulate what I've done with Carl, it just takes trust. There are certain trainers out there who just see their boxers as a job, just a way to make a living. I was never in this job to make a stack

of money. Carl brought me into this job and that's why I came into it with passion. I didn't take any money off him until the Martinez fight, so I did all that time working with him because I believed he could become world champion and achieve his dream. Now he's done it and we're going onto bigger and better things."

After Genaro, Arcel went on to train countless great fighters, including Roberto Duran and Benny Leonard, and at this stage, you would not bet against McGuigan doing the same. **BN**



WISE GUYS:
Haye [left] is
eight years
older than his
new trainer

McGUIGAN ON McGUIGAN

I NEVER really knew any different growing up because he's always been my dad [below, right]. Obviously I knew the importance of him to the Irish public especially, but also to the English public. He was always getting stopped in the street. I just kept to my own thing and went under the radar. He's great at picking people up, not so much on the technical side, but he's brilliant at giving people little bits of encouragement. If they jump out of a hard spar and I say, 'You did a fantastic job', it would mean a lot to them obviously, but if dad says it, it gives them that little bit more of a lift.



Photo: JOE CAMPOREALE/USA TODAY SPORTS

HEARTBREAKING:
Groves [right] attacks
Jack but loses the fight



NEW YEAR, NEW START

TALE OF THE TAPE

GEORGE GROVES	DOB/AGE	ANDREA DI LUISA
Mar 26, 1988/27		May 13, 1982/33
Hammersmith	HOMETOWN	Vetralla
English	NATIONALITY	Italian
5ft 11 1/2ins	HEIGHT	5ft 11 1/2ins
21-3 (16)	RECORD	18-3 (14)
Orthodox	STANCE	Orthodox
Nov 15, 2008/20	DEBUT/AGE	Oct 30, 2008/26
67	KO PERCENTAGE	67
18	FIGHTS IN ENGLAND	0

Groves sets off in pursuit of fourth world title shot, writes Daniel Herbert

★★☆☆ MAIN EVENT
★★★★ UNDERCARD

FOR some boxers, three failed world title challenges might be enough – a sign that it might be time to pack it in and pursue other things. **George Groves** clearly doesn't think that way.

On Saturday (January 30) at the Copper Box Arena in Hackney Wick, the Londoner returns four months after his latest world title setback to take on Italy's **Andrea Di Luisa**. The super-middleweight 10-rounder tops a bill promoted by Matchroom and the Sauerlands, televised on Sky Sports (UK).

With Di Luisa on the face of it an unthreatening opponent, chief interest resides in how Groves fares with new trainer Shane McGuigan, having dumped

Paddy Fitzpatrick, the coach he has blamed in part for his failure against WBC champ Badou Jack in September.

"I'm excited to be back," said Groves, who despite a hard career, including back-to-back title defeats by Carl Froch, is still only 27. "I've found working with Shane rejuvenating. I'm back punching hard, enjoying my boxing, and eager to get back to winning ways."

David Haye, also trained by McGuigan, easily dispatched Mark de Mori on the most recent big London show, but at least Di Luisa has better references than the overmatched Aussie. He's held the Italian, EU and WBC International Silver 168lbs belts, although there's no escaping the fact that every time he has stepped up in class he has been found wanting.

In November 2011, he was dropped four times and stopped in the 12th round by countryman Mouhamed Ali Ndiaye, then a year later, France's Christopher Rebrasse forced him to retire after seven sessions. Both contests were for the

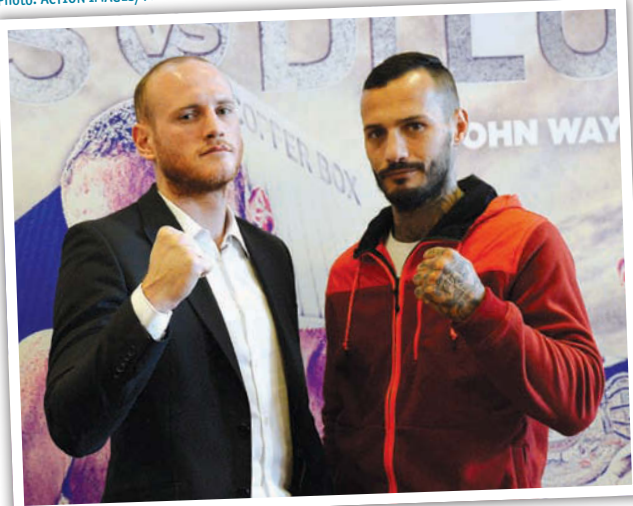
EBU's lesser EU belt, and Rebrasse is known to British fans for having lost on points over 12 to both Groves (in his first fight after the crushing second loss to Froch) and Callum Smith.

Last August, Di Luisa ventured to Montreal to tackle Lucian Bute, who was making his comeback 18 months after a light-

heavyweight loss to Jean Pascal. The big-punching Romanian-Canadian southpaw was far too good, outboxing Di Luisa before, in round four, dropping him with a left, cutting him under the right eye and prompting the referee's intervention.

**'I HOPE TO
AVENGE THE
JACK LOSS
AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE'**

STARTING OVER:
Groves [left]
drops a level
after recent
setbacks



Our report said Di Luisa didn't have the punch to bother Bute, although he did have a go in round four before Lucian lowered the boom.

Andrea has boxed once since then, a second-round knockout win on December 5 over Hungarian loser Gabor Csalek in a fight scheduled only for six. Yet his impressive stats (14 early wins from 18) might exaggerate his power – he has been taken the six-round limit by Ruslans Pojonisevs, the Latvian journeyman beaten early in Britain by both Callum Smith (ko 1) and Adam Etches (rtd 2).

Groves certainly doesn't intend to hang around on Saturday night. He said: "The Jack loss was frustrating and I hope to avenge it as soon as possible, starting on January 30 with a knockout win."

But then George's problem has never been generating power, but rather

defensive lapses and a tendency to fade in fights. New trainer McGuigan knows he has plenty of material to work with.

"George has all the skill but, more importantly, the work ethic and dedication needed to become a world champion," said McGuigan.

Given Groves holds a British title win in the pros (not to mention an amateur victory) over IBF king James DeGale – this publication's world best at 168lbs – one can understand why he's giving it another go. He said, "I want to get as many fights as possible and build momentum as I look to work my way back into world title contention."

Di Luisa ought not to derail those ambitions. After taking a look early on,

Groves will start putting some venom into his punches for a stoppage win in about five rounds.

A stacked undercard features some enticing encounters. Islington southpaw **John Ryder**, 21-2 (12), will no doubt be pushed hard by rugged Belarus veteran **Sergey Khomitsky**, 30-12-3 (13), for the vacant WBA International middleweight belt.

Also over 12, **John Wayne Hibbert**, 16-3 (10) and from Horndon-on-the-Hill, defends his Commonwealth super-lightweight crown against rising talent **Tommy Martin**, 13-0 (5), of St Neots. Hibbert's championship experience gives him the edge in what could well be the fight of the night.

TALKING POINT

GROVES struggled to find the motivation after his failures against Carl Froch, and consequently hasn't impressed for a long time. A top display is required to restore the faith.

Pick of three 10-rounders looks the fascinating final eliminator for the English super-middleweight title between Croydon's footballer-turned-boxer **Leon McKenzie**, 7-0-1 (3), and experienced **Kelvin Young**, 17-4-2 (1), from Swindon. Southpaw McKenzie is nine years older at 37, but probably the fresher, so can win on points.

THE VERDICT Groves gets an easy one following a gruelling world title bout.

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



POTENTIAL:
It is must-win
time for Ryder

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/LEE SMITH



DANGER MAN:
Khomitsky is a
master at upsets



EXPERT VIEW

**JACK
HIRSCH**

REPORTED ON
DI LUISA'S FIGHT
WITH LUCIAN
BUTE FOR BN

THIS is not about whether Groves wins, but how impressively he does so. Against Lucian Bute, Di Luisa basically stood in centre ring and got picked apart. Groves will not have to search for him. Di Luisa's chin might be a liability as well. Bute ended their fight pretty quickly when Di Luisa tried to punch with him. Di Luisa does not have the punch to rattle Groves, or the slickness to outbox him. His best hope is that Groves does not throw many punches, and he can steal a few of the rounds. Groves should prevail in six rounds or so.

SHOT OF THE WEEK



Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE

THE REBIRTH

GEORGE GROVES may have lost three world title fights but only one of those defeats was conclusive, and he is full of renewed hunger ahead of his return this Saturday (January 30), under new trainer Shane McGuigan



★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ GOOD ★★★★★ FAIR ★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

Reporters' star ratings for main events and undercards are based on in-ring entertainment, competitiveness and whether overall expectation was met

THE POWER

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE

FROM NOWHERE:
Traynor is left barely able to
respond by Walsh's right hand



Impressive
Walsh
emphatically
halts Traynor
to retain
British title

+ BETHNAL GREEN
JANUARY 22

★★★★★ MAIN EVENT
★★★★★ UNDERCARD
★★★★★ ATMOSPHERE

R

YAN WALSH made the first successful defence of his British featherweight title with a clinical, and perhaps unexpected,

fifth-round stoppage of the previously undefeated **Darren Traynor** inside York Hall, enhancing not only his individual reputation but also that of the promising Walsh fighting family.

Two minutes into the fifth round, Walsh was ahead in what was a competitive affair against a game opponent and with his superior class looked likely to extend that lead as

the fight progressed. Six seconds and a powerful right hand later, Aberdeen's Traynor was sent through the ropes, almost out of the ring and left in no position to continue, scarcely able to respond as referee Michael Alexander counted him out.

Greater tests await if he is to win a Lonsdale Belt outright, but having first won the vacant title via a split decision victory over Samir Mouneimne, Cromer's Walsh appears an improving fighter who is gradually growing into the role of British champion.

His greater punch variety and accuracy was instantly apparent even amid the high pace set from the opening bell, although there was a moment of doubt when Traynor clearly hurt him with a right hand of his own midway through the even second round before stinging him with the same

shot again towards its end.

Regaining his composure for the third, in which he opened an unremarkable cut by Traynor's right eye, the champion re-established his superior belief and class, and highlighted both by timing a strong straight left in the fourth of

12 scheduled rounds.

The end came in the fifth, when, having landed three lefts after a right hook, another right hook knocked Traynor through the ropes and a third of the way out of the ring, intensifying the difficulty he already faced to return to his feet inside Alexander's 10-count,

which he unsurprisingly was unable to do.

Unused judges were Jeff Hinds, John Keane and Marcus McDonnell.

If the end to Walsh's win was sudden, **Ahmet Patterson's** over Dudley's **Ryan Aston** was considerably more

**WALSH IS
GRADUALLY
GROWING
INTO THE
ROLE OF
CHAMPION**



**Declan
Warrington**
RINGSIDE

brutal. The talented Dulwich super-welterweight was visibly smaller than his opponent but was also significantly sharper, faster and more varied, and to the extent it surprised he did not secure his stoppage victory earlier than the sixth of the 10 scheduled rounds it arrived in.

An initially awkward clash of styles against southpaw Aston began to settle when Patterson's confidence grew from the third at his ability to time a fighter whose one-dimensional plan was largely reliant on remaining on the inside.

Gradually increasing his power, which Aston had admirably been taking, Patterson knocked his opponent to the canvas with a right hook towards the end of the fifth, which concluded with Aston answering referee McDonnell's count but looking to his corner for advice.

In a last stand, he hurt Patterson with a right the latter walked onto at the start of the sixth, before collapsing from a body shot McDonnell wrongly thought a low blow. After taking advantage of the time given to recover, Aston took several further hurtful rights before the last sent him to the canvas, and though he returned to his feet, McDonnell rightly waved the fight over with eight seconds of the round remaining.

Patterson secured the vacant IBF International super-welterweight belt.

Erith super-bantam **Lewis Pettitt** will have had few more thankless tasks than that presented by **Krzysztof Rogowski**.

Through little fault of his own, Pettitt was frequently frustrated by the Pole's consistent attempts to smother any sort of boxing and to lead with his head, for which ref Hinds punished him in the third by deducting a point.

The crucial breakthrough came with two knockdowns – each from rights to the body in that same round of the scheduled eight: the fight should have been waved off then, but it took two further knockdowns in the fourth before Hinds did so after 2-22, at which point Rogowski cynically protested he had been hit low.



SUPERIOR:
Walsh [right]
gets the edge over
Traynor with better variety

Hinds had also overseen, and rightly judged, Chelmsford's mobile **Billy Long** a 40-36 victor over four rounds versus Telford's **Kieron Gray**, who ended the fight with a swelling under his right eye.

Romford's **Sam McNess** also secured a 40-36 points win from Hinds over four, against Norwich's **Duane Green**, after an active performance.

There were also 40-36 points victories over four for Welling's **Archie Sharp** against Sheffield's **Qasim Hussain**, a late replacement, and West Ham's **Ben Smith** over Trowbridge's **Dan Carr**, each refereed by Lee Cook.

The evening's other stoppage was earned by Sidcup's **DP Carr**, 1-22 into the third round of his fight with another late replacement, **Aleksandrs Birkenbergs**. The victim, from Latvia, looked more like a 12-year-old boy than a prizefighter, and was exhausted by the end of the second. He crumbled after a left hook to the body in the next session, and Cook called a halt. It had been set for four.

THE VERDICT Walsh proves his class, and power, while enhancing his future.

FULL RESULTS

Ryan Walsh (126lbs), 20-1-1 (9), w rsf 5
Darren Traynor (125 1/2lbs), 11-1 (5);
Ahmet Patterson (153lbs), 17-0 (7), w rsf 6
Ryan Aston (153lbs), 18-3-2 (8);
Lewis Pettitt (129 1/2lbs), 18-2 (8), w rsf 4
Krzysztof Rogowski (124lbs), 10-16-5 (5);
Billy Long (168lbs), 4-0 (1), w pts 4
Kieron Gray (167lbs), 8-48-2 (1);
Sam McNess (155lbs), 3-0 (1), w pts 4
Duane Green, (155lbs), 4-19-4;
Archie Sharp (136 3/4lbs), 3-0 (1), w pts 4
Qasim Hussain (139 1/2lbs), 2-47;
Ben Smith (142lbs 2oz), 2-0, w pts 4
Dan Carr (148 1/2lbs), 3-80-2 (2);
DP Carr (135lbs 2oz), w rsf 3
Aleksandrs Birkenbergs (130 1/4lbs), 1-3 (1).



SHARP:
Patterson [left]
is too fast for
Aston, while
Pettitt [right]
gets through
a messy clash
with Rogowski



STANDING STILL

Photos: JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA/USA TODAY SPORTS

COUNTER CULTURE:
Garcia [right] lets Guerrero
advance before
finding the gaps



Garcia
outboxes
Guerrero
but needs
bigger tests

🇺🇸 LOS ANGELES, CA

JANUARY 23

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

★★★★☆ ATMOSPHERE



**Daniel
Herbert**

RINGSIDE

D

ANNY GARCIA stayed unbeaten, and remained among the world's best welterweights, by unanimously outpointing

Robert Guerrero over 12 rounds for the vacant WBC title at the Staples Center. But while the victory was clear-cut for all neutrals, it didn't advance Garcia's standing because it came over a man already thrashed by Floyd Mayweather and Keith Thurman.

Garcia will no doubt reflect on a job well done; this show marked the debut of Al Haymon's PBC project on the free-to-

air FOX network, and also drew a healthy crowd of 12,052 to this downtown LA venue (although most in attendance, of Mexican origins, booed Philadelphia's Puerto Rican-descended Garcia and cheered Guerrero, who is from Gilroy, California and of Mexican parentage).

But there are bigger names out there – and who better than other Haymon boxers such as Shawn Porter and Thurman, who clash in March, or even Amir Khan, who is Danny's mandatory challenger now that this match has filled the vacancy left by the retirement of Mayweather? Khan, who along with Mayweather was ringside on this night, lost to Garcia in a super-lightweight title unification in 2012 but may well be next.

Southpaw Guerrero was a good opponent to highlight Garcia's qualities. "The Ghost" may be a former world

champion at two weights but he has not carried his power up to welter and still advances in straight lines with little variety – all of which allowed Garcia to back off and time him with sharp counters.

Guerrero had enough to keep things competitive for five rounds, for me

taking the opener and the fifth, but once Danny had found his range – and knew Guerrero couldn't hurt him – he took complete control, sweeping the sixth to the 11th inclusive on my card. Jolting right hooks and left uppercuts steadily wore down

Guerrero, raising a nasty

bump under his left eye, and although Guerrero finished with a flourish as he outworked Garcia in a slam-bang last, it was too little too late.

Judges Max DeLuca, Ray Densico and Steve Weisfield all scored 116-112 in this Jack Reiss-refereed affair, yet such rare

**'I WAS
THROWING MY
COMBINATIONS
AND USING MY
LEGS LIKE MY
DAD TOLD ME'**

unanimity didn't stop the loser disputing the decision.

"I thought I won and definitely want a rematch," declared Guerrero. "I pressured him, I nailed him, I busted his body up. I outjabbed him. Nobody thought Garcia won but his team."

Naturally, Garcia disagreed: "I thought I won the fight clearly and the judges saw the same thing. Guerrero is tough and no one has ever stopped him. I knew I was going to win eight or nine rounds. He headbutted me so much on my forehead, but I was throwing my combinations and using my legs like my dad [trainer Angel Garcia] told me to."

I scored it 117-111 Garcia, although Guerrero was winning the eighth until Danny swung it his way late on with a terrific right hook. For what it's worth, CompuBox stats had Garcia landing 163 of 495 punches thrown for a 33 per cent success rate, while Guerrero landed 108 of 436 (25 per cent).

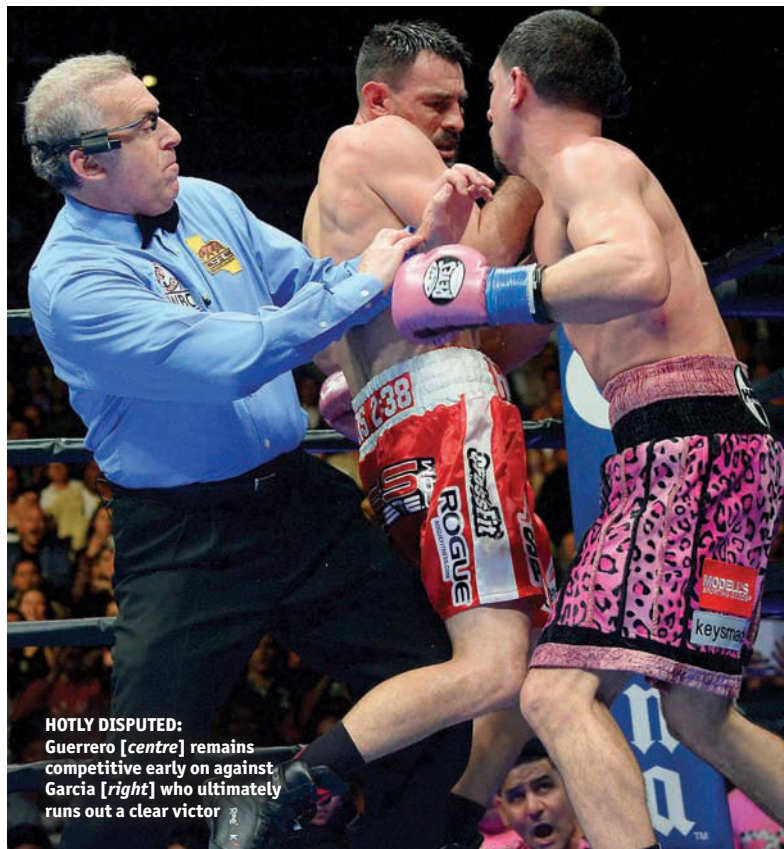
Joining the line of those awaiting a welterweight title crack is **Sammy Vasquez Jnr**, who won a WBC semi-final eliminator when **Aaron Martinez** retired after six of the scheduled 12 rounds with an injured left elbow.

"I hurt my elbow and couldn't throw my jab," revealed Martinez, who last year lost a disputed decision to Guerrero. "I started to feel it in the third and knew it was going to be tough to continue."

Ironically, Aaron had enjoyed his best sessions of the fight in the fourth and fifth, winning both for me, although perhaps it was a case of Vasquez easing off after a fast start.

Whatever, Martinez looked booked for defeat, although he hadn't been particularly hurt by any punch his opponent threw. Vasquez, from Monongahela in Pennsylvania, displayed the faster hands and greater variety, plus an ability to punch in combination.

Sammy forced the pace while Martinez covered up a lot, and even when the Los Angeles-based Mexican did connect, it was usually only with single blows.



HOTLY DISPUTED: Guerrero [centre] remains competitive early on against Garcia [right] who ultimately runs out a clear victor

That was never going to be enough to deter Vasquez, a US Army veteran who at the end led for all judges: Zac Young 60-54, Carla Caiz 59-55, Patrick Russell 58-56. Eddie Hernandez refereed.

Big US heavyweight hope **Dominic Breazeale**, from Glendale, California, kept his unbeaten record but only after surviving a heavy knockdown and outlasting **Amir Mansour**. The Newark, Delaware southpaw looked set for victory in the third (of 10 scheduled) when he floored Breazeale with a right hook, but he failed to press home his advantage in rounds four and five, allowing the tall local to get his boxing back together.

When Mansour, a 41-year-old who lost a decade to a prison sentence,

failed to come out for round six it seemed he was simply exhausted after setting too hot a pace in the first three sessions. Then it emerged he was suffering from a broken jaw, with referee Raul Caiz Snr accepting the retirement.

All three judges had Mansour ahead: David Mendoza 49-45, Jerry Cantu and Thomas Taylor both 48-46. Breazeale won the vacant WBC Continental Americas bauble but his tentative boxing and soft chin will prevent him getting anywhere near the top of an increasingly interesting heavyweight division.

THE VERDICT Amir Khan will fancy his chances if a Garcia rematch does happen in 2016.

FULL RESULTS

Danny Garcia (146 3/4lbs), 32-0 (16), w pts 12 **Robert Guerrero** (146 3/4lbs), 33-4-1 (18) 2NC; **Sammy Vasquez Jnr** (147lbs), 21-0 (15), w rtd 6 **Aaron Martinez** (147lbs), 20-5-1 (4); **Dominic Breazeale** (252 3/4lbs), 17-0 (15), w rtd 5 **Amir Mansour** (218lbs), 22-2-1 (16); **Alejandro Luna** (135 1/2lbs), 20-0 (15), w rtd 8 **Alan Herrera** (135 1/2lbs), 34-8 (22); **Min Wook Kim** (139 3/4lbs), 14-1 (11), w ko 5 **Erick Daniel Martinez** (139 1/2lbs), 11-4-1 (5); **Jesus Aguinaga** (138lbs), 4-3, w pts 6 **Luis Bello** (135 1/2lbs), 6-4 (2); **Jose Gomez** (125lbs), 5-0, w pts 4 **Michael Andrew Gaxiola** (124 1/2lbs), 4-6; **Victor Torres** (118lbs), 2-2-1 (1), w pts 4 **Antonio Santa Cruz** (116lbs), 1-2 (1); **Sergio Quiroz** (121lbs), 1-0, w pts 4 **Damon Simon** (120 1/2lbs), 0-3.



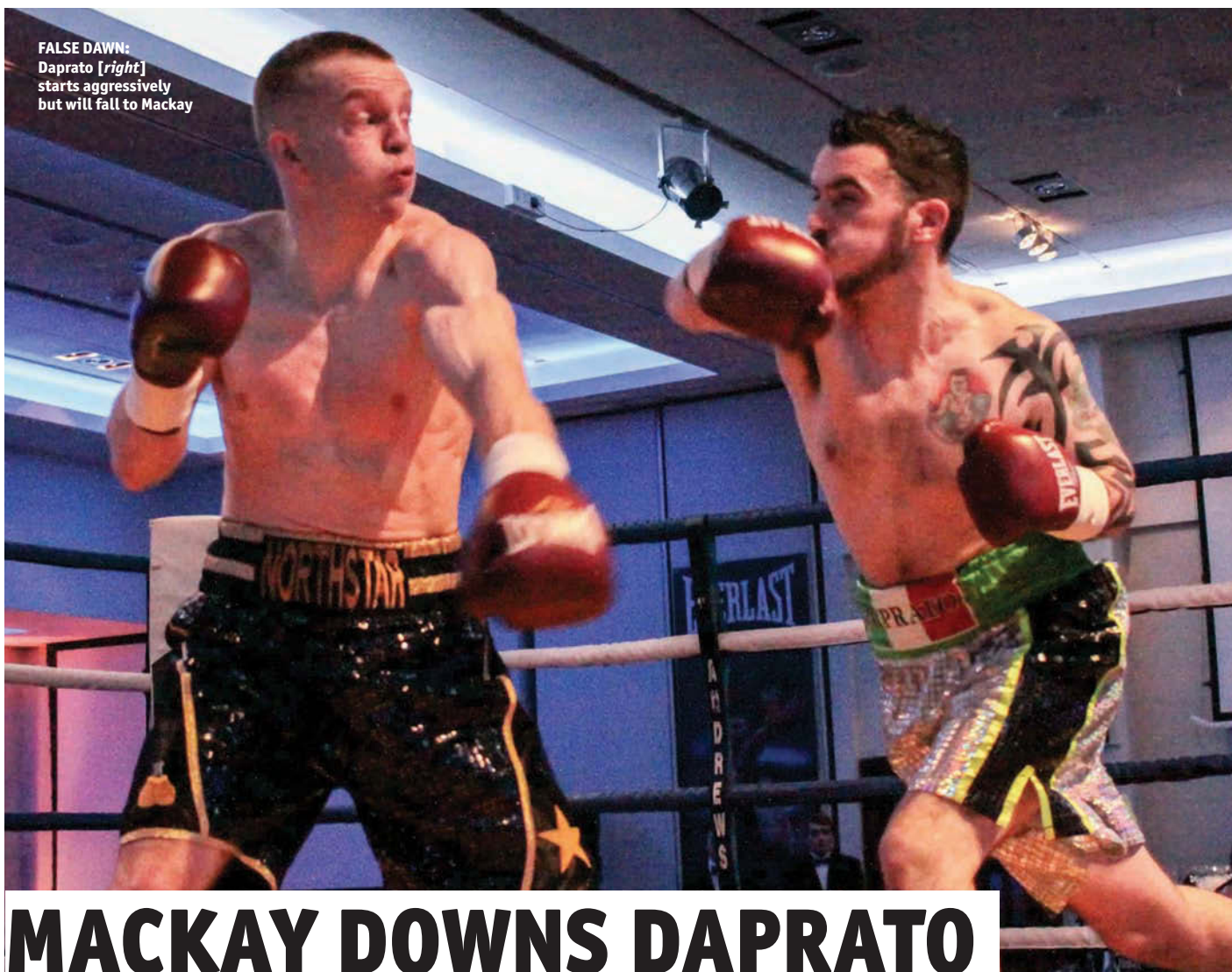
PUSHING AHEAD: Vasquez Jnr [right] forces the pace against Martinez



ENDURING: Breazeale [right] will outlast Mansour

Photo: STUART WARD

FALSE DAWN:
Daprato [right]
starts aggressively
but will fall to Mackay



MACKAY DOWNS DAPRATO

Andrew earns
an early win in
all-Scottish
affair



Eddie Higgins
RINGSIDE

GLASGOW

JANUARY 21

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

★★★★☆ ATMOSPHERE

THE Radisson Blu Hotel was the venue as St Andrew's Sporting Club produced their 43rd consecutive Burns Night celebratory show. **Andrew Mackay**, from Inverness, and **Darren Daprato**, of Newton Stewart, contested the vacant British Junior Classic Challenge lightweight belt over eight rounds.

Daprato's aggression was enough to claim the opening round, thereafter it was Mackay who took control of the contest. Andrew delivered a series of combinations that busted Daprato's nose, and had him holding on as his only means of defence. Darren began the third round in a

southpaw stance in an effort to confuse his aggressor, but Mackay closed down the space and forced the action to the ropes, where he again applied sustained pressure to his brave opponent. Referee Kenny Pringle had seen enough by this stage, and stopped the bout with 47 seconds gone in the session.

Greenock's **Grant Quigley** won the vacant British Junior Classic Challenge light-heavyweight title with a third-round stoppage win over **Mark Till**, of Stoke. The match was a war from the first bell, and was fought almost entirely on the inside, with both boxers landing hooks and uppercuts. By the third frame, it became obvious that the fight would not last the eight-round duration, as neither man gave ground. Quigley's pressure became more dominant as he forced Till on to the ropes and scored heavily with a left hook-right uppercut combination. The attack forced the timely intervention of Mr Pringle, with 2-39 on the clock.

At bantamweight over four rounds, Glasgow's **Ukashir Farooq** had a competitive night's work against

Anwar Alfadli, of Sheffield, but took the decision. The Scot demonstrated composed aggression from the opening bell, working the left hook to the body and head with considerable success to claim the first two rounds.

Alfadli came to life in the third as he slipped the Glaswegian's leads and threw dangerous overhand rights, however, the greater workrate came from Farooq. The Yorkshireman used his experience to outmanoeuvre Ukashir for large parts of the fourth and share the round. The fight was refereed by trialist official Darren Maxwell, and scored 40-37 by Mr Pringle.

THE VERDICT After his stoppage victory, Mackay is now setting his sights on a Scottish Area title shot.

FULL RESULTS

Andrew Mackay (136 1/2lbs), 4-0 (1), w rsf 3 **Darren Daprato** (140lbs 10z), 1-8; **Grant Quigley** (174lbs), 4-0 (2), w rsf 3 **Mark Till** (173 1/2lbs), 3-19-2 (2); **Ukashir Farooq** (116 1/2lbs), 2-0, w pts 4 **Anwar Alfadli** (118lbs 6oz), 2-55-5.



Floyd Mayweather doesn't say no to a freebie.
And neither should you.

Take a **FREE 30-day trial** of the **BOXING NEWS** App

1. **OPEN THE**  **APP STORE**
2. **DOWNLOAD THE BOXING NEWS APP**
3. **CLICK SUBSCRIBE FOR**
'6 MONTHS' OR '12 MONTHS'
4. **DOWNLOAD YOUR ISSUES**

Like what you see?
After 30 days, you can
show us the **MONEY.**



www.boxingnewsonline.net/digitalsubs

The 30-day free trial entitles individuals to four full-priced digital issues of Boxing News and is currently only available for apple devices. The offer is only available for new subscribers through the App store. To redeem this offer you must have a valid Apple ID. Upon registration for the trial, your method of payment will be authorised. We will begin billing you at the end of the free trial. It is possible to cancel your subscription between the first day your subscription was authorised and the 30th day of your trial. To do this launch the App Store, tap 'Featured', scroll down and tap your 'Apple ID', sign in, 'Manage App Subscriptions', select 'Boxing News' and turn off the subscription.

THE INGLES:
Ajisafe is flanked
by manager John
[left] and trainer
Dominic [right]



'I NEED A BREAKTHROUGH'

Unsung talent Bob Ajisafe tells **Danny Flexen** he needs someone to step up on his behalf and get him the chances he deserves



BOB AJISAFE is a quality fighter, the former undefeated British light-heavyweight champion and current Commonwealth king, around his physical prime aged 30 and after 18 pro fights (16 wins, seven inside the distance). But despite his undoubted ability and admirable accomplishments, the gangly, awkward southpaw

is not in the world top 10 for any major governing body, nor the EBU. It is frustrating for this writer, so it must be infuriating for articulate Ajisafe, but the Leeds man refuses to give up.

Why have you given up the British title?

Hennessy Sports who I work with were unable to bid for my mandated defence against Miles Shinkwin, as Channel 5, who they use, didn't want to pay to see me fight domestic-level opponents. Basically I'd already cleaned out the division in winning the *MaxiNutrition Knockout* tournament and that generated great viewing figures. I still didn't want to vacate, but in order to progress and to fight at the level I'm now operating at – fringe world contender level – I had to.

Explain your training and promotional situation.

John Ingle manages me and I'm working with Hennessy Sports, though I don't have an exclusive contract. I train with the Ingles in Sheffield, so most days I travel up there from Leeds. I turned pro somewhere else but when I came to university in Leeds, I joined up with them, I think for my ninth fight. I'm from Nottingham originally, but my dad wanted me to go to school in a rural area and he was an electrical engineer and got transferred to Northallerton, so I went to school and college in Darlington. I wanted to go back to a city for uni and I class Leeds as my home now, I've been here a while, made a lot of friends and my brother's here. I got a Sports Science BSc, I studied it because I had just turned pro and I wanted something to make myself a better athlete. After I retire I could end up using it.

You pipped Ovill McKenzie back in 2009 and he recently gained a draw – and perhaps should have won – in a cruiserweight world title shot against Victor Ramirez. How does that make you feel?

I probably should have got a world title shot by now, but I don't bear Ovill any animosity, everyone knows he's always been very dangerous and still is. I look back and take credit for beating him at

two days' notice. He's been avoided as well, but I haven't had the opportunity provided for me. These are the spaces that haven't been filled in, someone to create some structure, a path for me, to achievements. I see people with equal skill level, I might have more, but they've had that structure. Tony Bellew [who rose from the canvas to outscore Bob in 2010] fought three WBC Silver title fights then challenged [WBC champion] Adonis Stevenson for the title, so he's been on a path that his promoter [Eddie Hearn] has provided him. These are things I've been crying out for and it needs to be like that now.

2014 was a career-best year for you. You won the British title by outscoring Dean Francis, then produced two explosive performances – not always the case in the past – to triumph in the MaxiNutrition Knockout tournament on Channel 5. Why have you not capitalised on that amazing annum?

I did get credibility from that and I was expecting a European title shot in 2015. The Commonwealth title [which he won by knocking out Daniel Wanyoni in June] was supposed to be the first fight, but the opponent couldn't get a visa, so I had to take a warm-up then fight him. I just got injured towards the end of last year, so I couldn't fight in December. It was still a good year.

Why aren't you in any of the major governing bodies' top 10s?

It's a good point. The WBC, I think I'm 20-something with them [28]. I think it's because I haven't got any international titles or any of those governing bodies' belts, so I'm still going to be pretty low down, or not as high as I should be. I don't know why I'm not in the top 10 in Europe because I'd beat any of those guys ranked above me right now. I've been on to my team about it, making a stand politely. These things need to progress, I need

a three-fight deal so we know where we're going, so something's mapped out, something to elevate me into the top 10s. There was talk of me fighting Thomas Oosthuizen, that's still a possibility and could double as a WBA eliminator to fight [their 'regular' champion] Juergen Braehmer. I just need that breakthrough to make the transition to world level. I need to have someone take full control and to build my profile, someone working on my behalf to bring these fights in. British boxing is stronger than ever at the moment, so promoters have definitely got the pull to do it, so me being in shadows all the time is no good; I need someone to step up.



COMMONWEALTH KING: Ajisafe hovers over the stricken Wanyoni while claiming his latest title in June

'I SHOULD HAVE HAD A WORLD TITLE SHOT BY NOW'

AGAINST ALL ODDS



Joe DeGuardia emerged from a horrific car crash alive. It was nothing compared to the miracles he works as a boxing promoter, writes **Jack Hirsch**



JOE DeGUARDIA was feeling good. He had promoted yet another successful show at the Paramount Theater in Huntington, New York. And, as is his tradition, he hung around the venue until the early hours of the morning

socialising with fans, sponsors, and assorted boxing personnel. Although the Bronx-based promoter enjoys the company of others, he readily admits there is a degree of politics involved in keeping up with appearances.

With his night's work complete, DeGuardia got into his Mercedes Benz on that fateful July 29, 2012 morning. He drove to the Long Island Expressway for the routine trip home. Whatever was going through his mind soon became irrelevant. Without warning, a speeding vehicle, going in the wrong direction, and operated by a driver under the influence, hit his car head on. The impact of the crash sent DeGuardia's car spinning out of control for a couple of hundred feet. So horrific was the crash that the statistical probability of survival was slim. DeGuardia, though, managed to stagger out of his vehicle and make it to the side of the road before the oncoming traffic would have delivered the ultimate knockout blow. Incredibly, DeGuardia not only survived being a casualty but would be released from the hospital

three days later, sore, but well on the way to a full recovery. The other driver did not survive the crash.

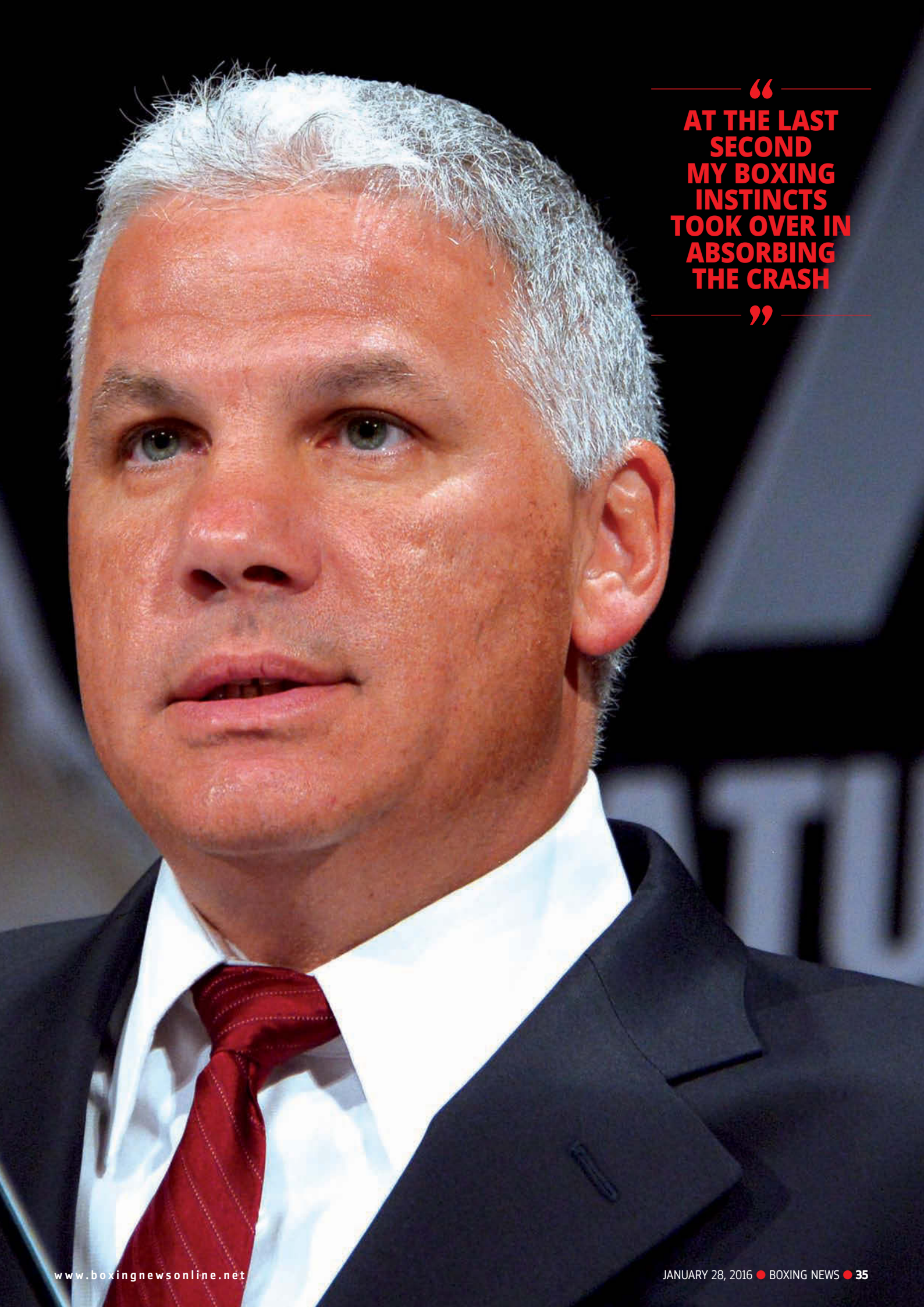
"The police told me the other driver was doing at least 70 mph," says DeGuardia. "Driving a Mercedes probably helped, but I think it was more than that. At the last second my boxing instincts took over in absorbing the crash. Fighters have to have the will to survive. My years in the ring taught me that."

DeGuardia never turned professional but was an amateur of note. In 1988, he won the New York Golden Gloves 147lb Open championship, being awarded a decision over Larry Barnes who, in a twist of fate, he would later promote.

DeGuardia also represented New York City in international competition. "I was born into this sport," chuckles DeGuardia. "There is a photo of me with gloves on when I was two. I grew up in the gym." Which all begs to ask the question: why didn't DeGuardia ever turn pro?

"My uncle and father were former fighters," Joe explains. "They thought I should have a different career. I went to law school, then became an assistant DA in the Bronx, before opening my own law practice."

But the boxing bug remained and DeGuardia obtained a manager's licence. He had a pretty good fighter, but was not able to obtain him fights. "Basically you could say that I started promoting shows in 1992, because I wasn't able to get ➤



“
**AT THE LAST
SECOND
MY BOXING
INSTINCTS
TOOK OVER IN
ABSORBING
THE CRASH**
”



BIG DRAW:
Tarver [right]
tags Jones Jnr
in their rubber
match

Photo: ACTION
IMAGES/REUTERS/
SCOTT AUDETT

► Lou Del Valle fights," reminisces DeGuardia. "By promoting the shows myself I was able to get him fights." DeGuardia would ultimately lead Del Valle to the WBA light-heavyweight championship.

DeGuardia maintained his law practice, but by 2000 he had transitioned to boxing full-time. "I did not have the time to do both," he says.

The big white limousine pulls up to the entrance of the Paramount Theater this past October 24. It is 19:30. DeGuardia is late, but it is by design. He gets out of the limo followed by his latest find, Australian super-middleweight Zac Dunn. It is the Aussie's American debut and first fight under the Star Boxing banner (DeGuardia's promotional company). DeGuardia and his protégé pose for the photographers. It is strictly business, but DeGuardia is enjoying himself.

He is dressed immaculately. For the sake of this story, Joe has arranged for my seat to be directly behind his, but warns he won't be sitting much. With the exception of Dunn's bout, which he watches in its entirety, his seat primarily remains unoccupied. The plan is to follow DeGuardia around for the evening and get a taste of what a promoter does during his own show. "I'll be all over the place," says DeGuardia. "Stick close to me."

DeGuardia, who has promoted 21 shows at this venue, spends an hour or so in the VIP room. He tries to remain upbeat, but admits he is not happy about what is transpiring. "This is the show from hell," he says. The card is reduced to four bouts. The various cancellations will result in DeGuardia losing money on the promotion. "It goes with the territory," he says.

DeGuardia discusses with his staff how the playing of the Australian and American national anthems should be done. He emphasises that in the event of an early knockout, there should be an intermission before the following fight.

We are introduced to Cletus Seldin, nicknamed the "Hebrew Hammer." Seldin, an undefeated super-lightweight from Long Island, is ranked in the top 10 by the WBC and WBO. "I am moving him along carefully, the same way I did with Chris Algieri," says DeGuardia. "I think that he can be a world champion someday." DeGuardia makes his way to ringside. He stays a few minutes before heading backstage where he has his photo taken with assorted military personnel. When

Joe gets back to ringside, he starts to focus on what is going on inside the ring. Dunn is fighting veteran Derrick Findley in a non-title fight.

Findley took the fight on three days' notice after original opponent, Denis Douglin, pulled out. Nothing is guaranteed, but Dunn is expected to dominate against a journeyman who enters the ring with a 22-16-1 (14) record. DeGuardia won't admit it, but this is supposed to be nothing more than a showcase for Dunn, 18-0 (15),

but disaster nearly strikes in round two when a left hook floors his fighter for a three-count. At the end of the third round, DeGuardia is subdued. I lean over and ask him does he care to comment. He declines to do so.

A seat is cleared for Algieri, who comes over to touch base with his promoter. DeGuardia multitasks, keeping his eyes on the ring while at the same time speaking to his fighter.

“
**ANDRADE DID NOT
CAPITALISE ON
BEING CHAMPION
THE WAY HE
SHOULD HAVE**
”

RUGGED MAN:
Heavyweight
slugger
Maddalone is
thankful to
his promoter

Photo:
ACTION IMAGES/
STEVEN PASTON

Dunn starts to come on in the sixth and DeGuardia gets verbal for the first time in the contest. "Keep it going!" he yells. Then in the seventh, when a volley of blows hurts Findley, DeGuardia shouts for Dunn to go to the body. At round's end he is up from his seat clapping with the rest of the fans.

Dunn gets the victory by a split 10-round decision, all scores being 95-94. His performance was disappointing, but DeGuardia puts a positive spin on things. "His defence was not good," the promoter admits, "but he'll be fine. You will see improvement in his upcoming fights."

The Paramount Theater is now DeGuardia's primary base of operations, but he has promoted in various venues in the United States. Sergio Martinez and Andre Ward have appeared on his shows, among others. However, the one mega promotion that stands out among the rest was the one at the St Pete Times Forum in Tampa, Florida, in 2005, when Antonio Tarver and Roy Jones Jr fought their rubber match in front of a sold out crowd of 20,000 people. "It's a long way from Yonkers Raceway," I say to DeGuardia at the post-fight press conference. He reflects a couple of seconds before repeating the words himself. It was a bond we shared, reminiscing about the club shows I had covered for *Boxing News* that were held under a makeshift barn parallel to the raceway. A place where fighters honed their craft inside the ring and DeGuardia his as a promoter. "That place was awesome. I had so much fun promoting there," the 52-year-old says.

DeGuardia, who will be inducted into the New York State Boxing Hall of Fame on April 3, has a reputation for watching his dollars very carefully. Some call him cheap, but others, like heavyweight Vinny Maddalone, prefer to use the word thrifty.

"Joe is a businessman," says Maddalone. "He has respect for money. That is how he was brought up. There have been times when I wished I got paid more, but Joe has always been fair with me."

Says DeGuardia: "I can be a tough negotiator, but once you have an agreement with me you will get paid what I said. I won't make a deal I can't honour. Even when my shows lose money, everyone gets paid what was agreed to."

Joining Algieri, Dunn, Seldin and Maddalone under the Star Boxing banner are Demetrius Andrade, Delvin Rodriguez, Joshua Clottey, Yuniesky Gonzalez and Joe Smith Jr, among others. In addition to Del Valle and Tarver, DeGuardia has also promoted Monte Barrett,



Kevin Johnson, Aaron Davis, Elvir Muriqi and David Telesco.

"Most of my guys wind up getting great opportunities," says DeGuardia, "but nothing is handed to them. We try to give them fights that create character. We want to keep them winning, but it shouldn't be a walk in the park. We do it with a budget that pales in comparison to our competitors. We work hard to develop fighters.

I have a great relationship with a lot of them. I feel a brotherhood to them, but the lack of loyalty I sometimes encounter has been very disappointing. They learn later in life that you really looked out for them."

Although he did not mention him by name, DeGuardia may have had Andrade in mind when he spoke. A 2008 United States Olympian, Andrade won the WBO super-welterweight title while being co-promoted by Star Boxing and Banner Promotions. He made a successful defence against Brian Rose and then flirted with another promotional group's offer, before returning to DeGuardia.

"He did not capitalise on being champion the way he should have," says Joe. "Hopefully he understands what he should be doing. My expectations are if he does what he's supposed to he will rise to the top."

DeGuardia is no longer promoting Tarver, but fondly looks back at what they accomplished together. "He had just gotten beat by Eric Harding and had his jaw broken in the fight. No one wanted to sign him, but I thought he had character that we could develop and cultivate."

It is Algieri though that DeGuardia uses as the model he is most proud of.

"It was the quintessential way to develop a fighter. We were able to keep him in the New York area.

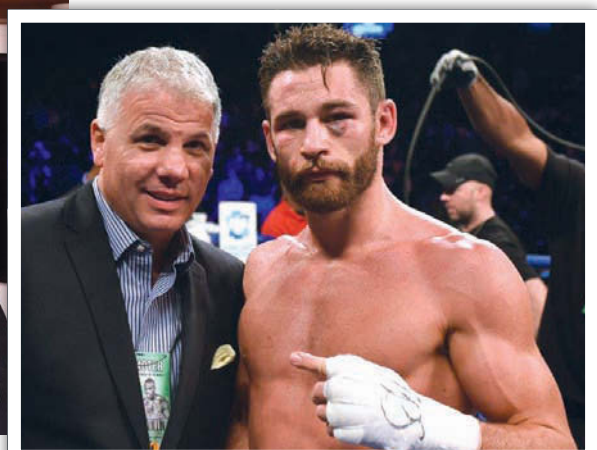
We were patient and made sure the timing was right. [Ruslan] Provodnikov was the perfect opponent for Chris. He was ready to win the [WBO super-lightweight] title when he fought for it.

"The same build-up is being used with Seldin, even though he and Chris are different in personality and ring styles. Algieri is a boxer, Seldin a brawler."

There are hypothetical pound-for-pound lists that rate boxers in different weight divisions. Perhaps we should do the same for promoters. DeGuardia's financial resources don't compare to Al Haymon's, Bob Arum's, Oscar De La Hoya's or Jay Z's, yet he still can compete with them to a degree.

DeGuardia has shown he can survive against all odds. **BN**

SEEING STARS:
DeGuardia
poses with
Dunn [far left]
and Algieri [far
right]



JANUARY THURSDAY 28

Crowne Plaza, Glasgow

Stephen Tiffney v Ryan Hanson;
Thomas Dickson v Michael Stupart;
Marc Kerr v Chris Jenkinson;
Stephen Simmons v Remigijus Ziausys.
(Promoter: MGM Scotland).

Park Lane Hilton, Mayfair

Sheldon Purdy v Georgi Georgiev;
Nick Webb v s/o; Richard Connolly v
Ali Wyatt. (Promoter: Hellraiser
Promotions).

FRIDAY 29

Belasco Theater, Los Angeles, California (Estrella TV)

Julian Ramirez v Christopher Martin;
Abraham Lopez v Carlos Valcarcel.
(Promoter: Golden Boy Promotions).

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Roberto Bolonti v Walter Cabral.
(Promoter: Boxeo de la Costa).

SATURDAY 30

Copper Box Arena, Hackney Wick (Sky Sports)

George Groves v Andrea Di Luisa;
John Ryder v Sergey Khomitsky (vacant
WBA International middleweight title);
John Wayne Hibbert (holder) v
Tommy Martin (Commonwealth super-
lightweight title); Martin Joseph
Ward (holder) v Mario Pisanti (WBC
International super-featherweight
title); Kris Agyei-Dua (holder) v Ben Hall
(Southern Area super-welterweight title);
Leon McKenzie v Kelvin Young; Ohara
Davies v Prince Ofotsu; Ted Cheeseman v
Ryan Hardy; Reece Bellotti v Dai Davies;
Charlie Duffield v Richard Harrison; Lucien
Reid v s/o; Craig Richards v Kieron Gray;
Louis Adolphe v William Warburton;
Deion Jumah v s/o. (Promoter:
Matchroom Boxing & Sauerland Event).

Guildhall, Plymouth

Chris Adaway v Danny Parsons; Courtney
Richards v Josh Burke; Christian Hoskin
Gomez v Mark Till; Ben Zacharkiw v Qasim
Hussain; Jack Bellingham v s/o; Ross
Roberts v s/o; Darren Townley v Duane
Grimes; Louis Aitken v s/o. (Promoter:
Black Country Boxing Promotion).

Bell Centre, Montreal, Canada (BoxNation & HBO)

Sergey Kovalev (holder) v Jean Pascal
(IBF, WBA Super & WBO light-heavyweight
titles); Dmitry Mikhaylenko v Karim
Mayfield; Renan St Juste v Francis
Lafreniere (vacant IBF International
middleweight title); Virgilijus Stapulionis
v Laszlo Fazekas; Joel Diaz Jnr v
Abraham Gomez. (Promoter: Main Events
& Interbox).

Shanghai Oriental Sports Center, China

Zou Shiming v Natan Santana Coutinho
(vacant WBO International flyweight title);
Ik Yang v Chalernpol Singwancha;
Ryota Murata v Gaston Alejandro Vega;
Peng Qu v Aaron Lai; Andrey Kalyuzhnyy v
Abdallah Paziwapazi. (Promoter: Top Rank
& SECA Ltd).

Marriott Convention Center, Burbank, California (UniMas)

Jose Felix Jnr v Ricky Sismundo;
Egor Mekhontsev v Felipe Romero;
Danny Valdivia v Kenneth Council;
Arnold Barboza Jnr v Robbie Cannon.
(Promoter: Top Rank & Bash Boxing &
PR Sports Promotions Inc).

SUNDAY 31

Seminole Casino, Immokalee, Florida (Bounce TV)

Erickson Lubin v Jose de Jesus Macias;
Dyah Davis v Edgar Perez.

FEBRUARY

WEDNESDAY 3

Prince Regent Hotel, Chigwell

Boy Jones Jnr v s/o; Lee Markham v s/o.
(Promoter: Longshot Sports &
Double A Promotions).

THURSDAY 4

Thailand

Knockout CP Freshmart (holder) v
Carlos Buitrago (Interim WBA strawweight
title). (Promoter: Petpiya Fight).

FRIDAY 5

Roadstone Club, Dublin, Ireland

Gerard Whitehouse v s/o; Sean Turner v
s/o; Steve Collins Jnr v s/o; Ciaran Mullen
v s/o; Ian Tims v s/o; James Metcalf v s/o;
Tshifhiwa Munyai v s/o; Luke Keeler v s/o.
(Promoter: MGM Promotions).

Fantasy Springs Casino, Indio, California (Estrella TV)

Randy Caballero v Ruben Garcia;
Frankie Gomez v Silverio Ortiz.
(Promoter: Golden Boy Promotions).

Bangkok, Thailand

Stamp Kiatniwat (holder) v Gregorio
Lebron (Interim WBA flyweight title).
(Promoter: Galaxy Boxing Promotion).

Balai Sarbini Convention Hall, Jakarta, Indonesia

Daud Yordan v Yoshitaka Kato.
(Promoter: Mahkota Promotions).

Gymnase du Lycee Technique de Monaco, Monte Carlo

Johann Duhaupas v Marcelo Luiz
Nascimento; Obodai Sai v Pavel Semjonov.
(Promoter: The Queen of Boxing LLC &
J-Suge & AS Monaco Boxe).

SATURDAY 6

Magna Centre, Rotherham

Sam O'maison v Anthony Hardy;
Brad Watson v Craig Derbyshire; Hamed
Ghaz v Fonz Alexander; Ramzy Nassa
v Brett Fidoe; Leon Field v Kristian
Laight; Razaq Najib v Luke Fash; Loua
Nassa v Jordan Turner; Tom Bell v Scott
McCormack; Osman Aslam v Ricky Leach.
(Promoter: Dennis Hobson Promotions).

Europa Hotel, Belfast

James Fryers v Maxi Hughes; James
Tennyson v Antonio Horvatic; Paul Hyland
Jnr v Jan Holec; Joe Fitzpatrick v Ruslans
Berdimuradovs; Feargal McCrory v Peter
Mellar; Tyrone McCullagh v Antons Zacets.
(Promoter: Mark H Dunlop).

Newport Centre

Craig Kennedy v Tony Conquest; Barrie
Jones (holder) v Bradley Pryce (Welsh
Area super-welterweight title); Andrew
Selby v s/o; Tony Dixon v s/o; Sonny Lee v
s/o; Morgan Jones v s/o; Nathan Thorley v
s/o; Jermaine Asare v s/o; Ashley Brace v
s/o. (Promoter: Sanigar Events).

National Stadium, Dublin, Ireland (BoxNation)

Danny Butler v Gary Corcoran (vacant WBO
Inter-Continental super-welterweight
title); Jamie Kavanagh v Antonio Joao
Bento (vacant WBO European lightweight
title); Peter McDonagh v s/o; Craig O'Brien
v s/o; Sean Creagh v s/o; Philip Sutcliffe
Jnr v s/o; Patrick Hyland v Reynaldo
Cajina; Stephen Ormond v Ivans Levickis;
Declan Geraghty v s/o; Gary Sweeney
v Moses Matovu; Romeo Romao v s/o;
Anthony Fitzgerald v Sam Wall.
(Promoter: MGM Promotions &
Queensberry Promotions).

Korakuen Hall, Tokyo, Japan

Ryosuke Iwasa v Dennis Tubieron.
(Promoter: Teiken Promotions).

TUESDAY 9

Sands Bethlehem Event Center, Pennsylvania (FOX Sports 1)

Jamel Herring v Luis Eduardo Flores.
(Promoter: King's Promotions).

FRIDAY 12

Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand

Pungluang Sor Singyu (holder) v
Jetro Pabustan (WBO bantamweight
title). (Promoter: Onesongchai Boxing
Promotion).

Olympic Park Arena, Lu Zhou, China

Jun Qiu Xiao v Raymond Commey;
Xu Chan v Isaías Santos Sampaio;
Wei Qian Xian v Takafumi Nakajima;
Bai Shan Bo v Tackie Annan.
(Promoter: Zowi Boxing Promotions).

SATURDAY 13

Echo Arena, Liverpool (BoxNation)

Terry Flanagan (holder) v Derry Mathews
(WBO lightweight title); Liam Williams
(holder) v Navid Mansouri (British and
Commonwealth super-welterweight titles);
Tommy Langford (holder) v Lewis Taylor
(WBO Inter-Continental middleweight
title); Matty Askin (holder) v Lawrence
Bennett (English cruiserweight title);
Steven Lewis v Marek Laskowski;
Paul Butler (holder) v s/o (WBO European
super-flyweight title); Thomas Stalker v
s/o; Ryan Farrag v s/o; Vijender Singh v
s/o; Leon Woodstock v Joe Beeden;
Kevin Satchell v s/o. (Promoter:
Queensberry Promotions).

Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds

Reece Cartwright v s/o; Zahid Hussain v
s/o. (Promoter: Rebecca Margel).

Dearne Valley Leisure Centre, Denaby

Steven Hale v s/o; Josh Wale v s/o;
Robbie Barrett v s/o; David Allen v s/o;
Lee Appleyard v s/o. (Promoter:
Stefy Bull Promotions).

GL1 Leisure, Gloucester

Akeem Ennis Brown v Chris Adaway;
Andy Harris v Dean Evans; Tim Cutler
v Jason Nesbitt; Kane Stewart v
Kristian Laight; Scott Gibbins v Shane
Dragonslayer. (Promoter: KM Promotions).

Studio City, Los Angeles, California (UniMas)

Alex Saucedo v Clarence Booth; Oleksandr
Gvozdyk v s/o; Egidijus Kavaliauskas v s/o.
(Promoter: Top Rank).

Enghien, Belgium

Farid Hakimi (holder) v Steve Jamoye
(Belgian super-lightweight title).
(Promoter: Nicolas Vinet).

THURSDAY 18

The Hanger, Costa Mesa, California

Sergey Kuzmin v Rodney Hernandez.
(Promoter: Roy Englebrecht Events).

BOXING ON THE BOX

THURSDAY 28

7.00pm BoxNation
Bunce's Boxing Hour
9.00pm BoxNation
Cassius and Helder
9.30pm BoxNation
Boxing Matters Special

SATURDAY 30

7.30pm Sky Sports 1
LIVE George Groves v
Andrea Di Luisa

SUNDAY 31

2.00am BoxNation
LIVE Sergey Kovalev v
Jean Pascal

WEDNESDAY 3

1.05am Channel 4
KOTV Boxing Weekly

**HEAVYWEIGHT**

over 200lbs/14st 4lbs

- 1 **TYSON FURY** 25-0 (ENG)
- 2 **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** 64-4 (UKR)
- 3 **ALEXANDER POVETKIN** 30-1 (RUS)
- 4 **DEONTAY WILDER** 36-0 (USA)
- 5 **KUBRAT PULEV** 22-1 (BGR)
- 6 **LUIS ORTIZ** 24-0 (CUB)
- 7 **BERMANE STIVERNE** 25-2-1 (CAN)
- 8 **CARLOS TAKAM** 33-2-1 (CMR)
- 9 **CHARLES MARTIN** 23-0-1 (USA)
- 10 **VYACHESLAV GLAZKOV** 21-1-1 (UKR)

CRUISERWEIGHT

200lbs/14st 4lbs

- 1 **KRZYSZTOF GLOWACKI** 25-0 (POL)
- 2 **MARCO HUCK** 38-3-1 (GER)
- 3 **GRIGORY DROZD** 40-1 (RUS)
- 4 **DENIS LEBEDEV** 28-2 (RUS)
- 5 **VICTOR EMILIO RAMIREZ** 22-2-1 (ARG)
- 6 **OLA AFOLABI** 22-4-4 (ENG)
- 7 **FIRAT ARSLAN** 36-8-2 (GER)
- 8 **ILUNGA MAKABU** 19-1 (COD)
- 9 **TONY BELLEW** 26-2-1 (ENG)
- 10 **OVILL MCKENZIE** 25-12-1 (ENG)

LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHT

175lbs/12st 7lbs

- 1 **SERGEY KOVALEV** 28-0-1 (RUS)
- 2 **ADONIS STEVENSON** 27-1 (CAN) *[above]*
- 3 **JEAN PASCAL** 30-3-1 (CAN)
- 4 **JUERGEN BRAEHMER** 47-2 (GER)
- 5 **ANDRZEJ FONFARA** 28-3 (POL)
- 6 **ARTUR BETERBIEV** 9-0 (RUS)
- 7 **ELEIDER ALVAREZ** 19-0 (COL)
- 8 **ANDRE WARD** 28-0 (USA)
- 9 **ISAAC CHILEMBA** 24-3-2 (MAW)
- 10 **VYACHESLAV SHABRANSKY** 14-0 (UKR)

SUPER-MIDDLEWEIGHT

168lbs/12st

- 1 **JAMES DeGALE** 22-1 (ENG)
- 2 **ARTHUR ABRAHAM** 44-4 (GER)
- 3 **BADOU JACK** 20-1-1 (SWE)
- 4 **LUCIAN BUTE** 32-3 (CAN)
- 5 **GEORGE GROVES** 21-3 (ENG)
- 6 **ANTHONY DIRRELL** 28-1-1 (USA)
- 7 **FEDOR CHUDINOV** 14-0 (RUS)
- 8 **ANDRE DIRRELL** 24-2 (USA)
- 9 **FELIX STURM** 39-5-3 (GER)
- 10 **GILBERTO RAMIREZ** 33-0 (MEX)

**MIDDLEWEIGHT**

160lbs/11st 6lbs

- 1 **SAUL ALVAREZ** 46-1-1 (MEX)
- 2 **MIGUEL COTTO** 40-5 (PRI)
- 3 **GENNADY GOLOVKIN** 34-0 (KAZ)
- 4 **DANIEL JACOBS** 31-1 (USA)
- 5 **BILLY JOE SAUNDERS** 23-0 (ENG)
- 6 **PETER QUILLIN** 32-1-1 (USA)
- 7 **ANDY LEE** 34-3-1 (IRL)
- 8 **DAVID LEMIEUX** 34-3 (CAN) *[above]*
- 9 **DANIEL GEALE** 31-4 (AUS)
- 10 **HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM** 31-2 (FRA)

SUPER-WELTERWEIGHT

154lbs/11st

- 1 **ERISLANDY LARA** 22-2-2 (CUB)
- 2 **AUSTIN TROUT** 30-2 (USA)
- 3 **JERMALL CHARLO** 23-0 (USA)
- 4 **JERMELL CHARLO** 27-0 (USA)
- 5 **DEMETRIUS ANDRADE** 22-0 (USA)
- 6 **VANES MARTIROSYAN** 36-2-1 (USA)
- 7 **CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE** 34-6 (USA)
- 8 **CARLOS MOLINA** 24-6-2 (USA)
- 9 **ISHE SMITH** 28-8 (USA)
- 10 **LIAM SMITH** 22-0-1 (ENG)

WELTERWEIGHT

147lbs/10st 7lbs

- 1 **MANNY PACQUIAO** 57-6-2 (PHL)
- 2 **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 33-1-1 (USA)
- 3 **KELL BROOK** 35-0 (ENG)
- 4 **AMIR KHAN** 31-3 (ENG)
- 5 **SHAWN PORTER** 26-1-1 (USA)
- 6 **KEITH THURMAN** 26-0 (USA)
- 7 **DANNY GARCIA** 32-0 (USA)
- 8 **LAMONT PETERSON** 34-3-1 (USA)
- 9 **ROBERT GUERRERO** 33-4-1 (USA)
- 10 **JESSIE VARGAS** 26-1 (USA)

SUPER-LIGHTWEIGHT

140lbs/10st

- 1 **VIKTOR POSTOL** 28-0 (UKR)
- 2 **LUCAS MATTHYSSE** 37-4 (ARG)
- 3 **TERENCE CRAWFORD** 27-0 (USA)
- 4 **ADRIEN BRONER** 31-2 (USA)
- 5 **JOSE BENAVIDEZ** 24-0 (USA)
- 6 **KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV** 19-2 (RUS)
- 7 **MAURICIO HERRERA** 22-5 (USA)
- 8 **EDUARD TROYANOVSKY** 23-0 (RUS)
- 9 **CESAR RENE CUENCA** 48-1 (ARG)
- 10 **ANTONIO OROZCO** 23-0 (MEX)

**LIGHTWEIGHT**

135lbs/9st 9lbs

- 1 **JORGE LINARES** 40-3 (VEN)
- 2 **TERRY FLANAGAN** 29-0 (ENG)
- 3 **ISMAEL BARROSO** 19-0-2 (VEN)
- 4 **DEJAN ZLATICANIN** 21-0 (MNE)
- 5 **YURIORKIS GAMBOA** 25-1 (CUB)
- 6 **ANTHONY CROLLA** 30-4-3 (ENG)
- 7 **ARGENIS MENDEZ** 23-3-1 (DOM)
- 8 **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ** 35-5 (MEX)
- 9 **RANCES BARTHELEMY** 24-0 (CUB)
- 10 **DENIS SHAFIKOV** 36-2-1 (RUS)

SUPER-FEATHERWEIGHT

130lbs/9st 4lbs

- 1 **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA** 24-0-1 (JPN)
- 2 **FRANCISCO VARGAS** 23-0-1 (MEX)
- 3 **TAKASHI MIURA** 29-3-2 (JPN)
- 4 **JAVIER FORTUNA** 29-0-1 (DOM)
- 5 **BRYAN VASQUEZ** 34-2 (CRI)
- 6 **SERGIO THOMPSON** 30-4 (MEX)
- 7 **ROMAN MARTINEZ** 29-2-3 (PRI)
- 8 **ORLANDO SALIDO** 42-13-3 (MEX)
- 9 **EDEN SONSONA** 34-6-2 (PHL)
- 10 **JOSE PEDRAZA** 20-0 (PRI)

FEATHERWEIGHT

126lbs/9st

- 1 **VASYL LOMACHENKO** 5-1 (UKR)
- 2 **GARY RUSSELL JNR** 26-1 (USA)
- 3 **LEO SANTA CRUZ** 31-0-1 (MEX)
- 4 **SIMPIWE VETYEKA** 28-3 (RSA)
- 5 **ABNER MARES** 29-2-1 (MEX)
- 6 **LEE SELBY** 22-1 (WAL)
- 7 **JESUS CUELLAR** 28-1 (ARG)
- 8 **EVGENY GRADOVICH** 21-1-1 (RUS)
- 9 **RONNY RIOS** 25-1 (USA)
- 10 **JAYSON VELEZ** 23-1-1 (PRI)

SUPER-BANTAMWEIGHT

122lbs/8st 10lbs

- 1 **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** 16-0 (CUB)
- 2 **SCOTT FRAMPTON** 21-0 (NIR)
- 3 **CARL QUIGG** 31-0-2 (ENG)
- 4 **NONITO DONAIRE** 36-3 (PHL) *[above]*
- 5 **KIKO MARTINEZ** 35-6 (SPA)
- 6 **GENESIS SERVANIA** 27-0 (PHL)
- 7 **ALBERT PAGARA** 25-0 (PHL)
- 8 **REY VARGAS** 25-0 (MEX)
- 9 **JULIO CEJA** 30-1 (MEX)
- 10 **MANUEL AVILA** 19-0 (USA)

BANTAMWEIGHT

118lbs/8st 6lbs

- 1 **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA** 24-0-2 (JPN)
- 2 **JUAN CARLOS PAYANO** 17-0 (DOM)
- 3 **ANSELMO MORENO** 35-4-1 (PAN)
- 4 **JAMIE McDONNELL** 27-2-1 (ENG)
- 5 **TOMOKI KAMEDA** 31-2 (JPN)
- 6 **LEE HASKINS** 32-3 (ENG)
- 7 **PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU** 51-3 (THA)
- 8 **RAU'SHEE WARREN** 13-1 (USA)
- 9 **ZHANAT ZHAKIYANOV** 26-1 (KAZ)
- 10 **SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI** 46-6-1 (THA)

**SUPER-FLYWEIGHT**

115lbs/8st 3lbs

- 1 **NAOYA INOUE** 9-0 (JPN)
- 2 **OMAR ANDRES NARVAEZ** 44-2-2 (ARG)
- 3 **CARLOS CUADRAS** 34-0-1 (MEX)
- 4 **SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI** 38-4-1 (THA)
- 5 **ZOLANI TETE** 22-3 (RSA)
- 6 **KOHEI KONO** 31-8-1 (JPN)
- 7 **NORBERTO JIMENEZ** 23-8-4 (DOM)
- 8 **LUIS CONCEPCION** 34-4 (PAN)
- 9 **McJOE ARROYO** 17-0 (PRI)
- 10 **DAVID SANCHEZ** 28-3-2 (MEX)

FLYWEIGHT

112lbs/8st

- 1 **ROMAN GONZALEZ** 44-0 (NIC)
- 2 **JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA** 33-2 (MEX)
- 3 **AMNAT RUENROENG** 17-0 (THA)
- 4 **BRIAN VILORIA** 36-5 (USA)
- 5 **KAZUTO IOKA** 19-1 (JPN)
- 6 **JUAN CARLOS REVECO** 36-3 (ARG)
- 7 **MORUTI MTHALANE** 32-2 (RSA)
- 8 **EDGAR SOSA** 51-9 (MEX)
- 9 **McWILLIAMS ARROYO** 16-2 (PRI)
- 10 **NAWAPHON POR CHOKCHAI** 32-0 (THA)

LIGHT-FLYWEIGHT

108lbs/7st 10lbs

- 1 **DONNIE NIETES** 37-1-4 (PHL)
- 2 **YU KIMURA** 18-2-1 (JAP)
- 3 **PEDRO GUEVARA** 26-2-1 (MEX)
- 4 **RYOICHI TAGUCHI** 23-2-1 (JPN)
- 5 **ALBERTO ROSSEL** 34-9 (PER)
- 6 **AKIRA YAEGASHI** 23-5 (JPN)
- 7 **JAVIER MENDOZA** 24-3-1 (MEX)
- 8 **REY LORETO** 21-13 (PHL)
- 9 **MOISES FUENTES** 23-2-1 (MEX)
- 10 **RANDY PETALCORIN** 23-1-1 (PHL)

STRAWWEIGHT

105lbs/7st 7lbs

- 1 **HEKKIE BUDLER** 29-1 (RSA)
- 2 **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN** 40-0 (THA)
- 3 **JOSE ARGUMENTO** 16-3-1 (MEX)
- 4 **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA** 30-8 (JPN)
- 5 **KNOCKOUT CP FRESHMART** 11-0 (THA)
- 6 **CARLOS BUITRAGO** 28-1-1 (NIC)
- 7 **XIONG ZHAO ZHONG** 26-6-1 (CHN)
- 8 **KOSEI TANAKA** 6-0 (JPN)
- 9 **DENVER CUELLO** 36-5-6 (PHL)
- 10 **BYRON ROJAS** 16-2-3 (NIC)

POUND-FOR-POUND

The best of the best

- 1 **MANNY PACQUIAO** 57-6-2 (PHL)
- 2 **ROMAN GONZALEZ** 44-0 (NIC)
- 3 **ANDRE WARD** 28-0 (USA)
- 4 **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 33-1-1 (USA)
- 5 **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** 16-0 (CUB)
- 6 **SERGEY KOVALEV** 28-0-1 (RUS)
- 7 **SAUL ALVAREZ** 46-1-1 (MEX) *[above]*
- 8 **MIGUEL COTTO** 40-5 (PRI)
- 9 **GENNADY GOLOVKIN** 34-0 (KAZ)
- 10 **TERENCE CRAWFORD** 27-0 (USA)

● If a fighter has been inactive for over a year, he will not be included in the rankings, unless he has a fight officially scheduled.

● Each fighter is ranked on the results they have achieved in their own specific weight division (excluding the pound-for-pound list).

● A fighter cannot be ranked in a specific weight division until he has competed in that division.

VESTED *INTEREST*

Meet the personalities
at the heart of the sport
With JOHN DENNEN



John Dennen

@BoxingNewsJD

Amateur Editor

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/
JASON CAIRNDUFF



ONWARDS AND UPWARDS:
Fowler wants to move
on and forget about the
difficult 2015 he endured

Antony Fowler is determined
to get back on track in 2016

IT should have been very different. After a breakthrough World bronze medal in 2013, Antony Fowler won the following year's

Commonwealth Games in style. He should have been one of the GB team's stars as the road to the Rio Olympics began in earnest last year. Instead he faltered. He lost in the World Series of Boxing and the European Games. An operation meant he couldn't go to the European championships, leaving him unable to qualify for the Worlds.

"I was plagued by injuries," he lamented, "so hopefully 2016 is a lot better for me. I got a big cut in my very first fight. Two weeks later I boxed again and it reopened. I had decisions that should have gone my way that didn't, I had the nose operation that put me out of the Europeans, it couldn't have been much worse."

The cut impacted on his preparation. "For all my fights I couldn't spar, my eye weren't in, my range weren't in. I wasn't boxing my best," Antony continued. It left him frustrated. "I had to sit back and watch the Worlds, I couldn't even get my chance to go, so that was very frustrating, but everything's meant to be, everything that happens happens, doesn't it? This year all I'm going to do is put in 100 per cent, be very focused, and hopefully this year goes my way."

He is working on improvements. "Mainly getting my feet in range and cutting the ring off and tidying stuff up a bit, not going as reckless," Antony explained. "The jab's my key weapon. It sets everything up and that fight [against Uzbek Hurshidbek Normatov in the WSB], I neglected it and it cost me dearly, so I'm not making that mistake again."

He also needs to keep his composure. "Instead of opening up swinging, when I get tired [I need to] keep my shape. Maybe I got a false sense of security at the Commonwealth Games, I was winning every fight easily, no one

touched me. I didn't adapt to the styles [in 2015]. The only problem has been southpaws running away, I've had problems with that," he said.

Middleweight is certainly a competitive weight class. In 2015, Ireland's Michael O'Reilly won the European Games and a bronze at the World championships, yet he didn't win an Olympic place last year. The opposition therefore at the next Olympic qualifier will still be high quality. "I boxed him before, I beat him," Fowler noted of O'Reilly. "Two years ago I beat him in the Chemistry Cup. I can deal with orthodox much better, but I'm starting to get used to the southpaws."

Arlen Lopez is the World gold medallist and the number one in the division. He impressively beat Uzbekistan's Bektimir Melikuziev in their World final. "The Cuban beat [Melikuziev] easily, which I was surprised at, but he boxed the wrong fight against the Cuban," Fowler reflected.

The Liverpoolian remains adamant he can go all the way. "I know I'm good enough to qualify [for the Games], and I'm good enough to medal," he promised.



ON TWITTER
@BoxingNewsJD



ON FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com/boxingnewsonline



ONLINE
www.bonngnewsnonline.net

WEB WISDOM

Rotunda club show next Friday, January 29, at the gym. Rotunda ABC, Lambeth Road, L4 1SH.

Always worth watching
ROTUNDA ABC in action.

Quality sparring done today – 7x3.5-min rounds, 30 secs rest with world-level fighters. Golden Gloves' MARCEL BRAITHWAITE is working hard.

Good spar this morning with the big fella, Joe Joyce. Another quality camp done.

Welsh heavyweight KODY DAVIES has been in the thick of things with the World bronze medallist.

The feeling of happiness I get when glancing at my physical progress in the mirror is almost as satisfying as eating cereal naked in bed. Unique US heavy CAM F AWESOME obtains satisfaction from the strangest of pastimes.

Well done @consheehan89. Off to winning ways on his pro debut.

Ireland's ADAM NOLAN congratulates his countryman, Con Sheehan, on a successful first outing in the paid ranks.

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/JOHN CLIFTON



DOMESTIC RIVALS: Clarke [right] loses to Joyce in the ABAs, but believes he is now gaining on his countryman

QUICK-FIRE Q&A

Big Frazer tells us what it is like on the international circuit and chasing Joe Joyce

WILL the five-round distance in the World Series of Boxing be good experience for the pros?

When you think about it, it's six minutes longer [than a typical amateur bout], it's nothing really. We do it in the gym. When it comes to turning pro, maybe we'll skip the four-rounders and go into the six-rounders straightaway. The extra six minutes shouldn't be an issue. It gives us that little bit more experience. Even in the mindset, you've got no vest, no headguard, one weigh-in, it's all a step closer to the pro game.

It's tough for you to get to the Olympics with Joe Joyce on the same team. What's the qualification process looking like for you?

I don't think it's tough. I'm being told it's a 50-50 battle between us both. A lot of people are forgetting about me, but I'm coming in under the radar. I haven't lost for a while. I lost once last year in January and I think I got a bit of a dodgy decision. I'm in good form. Joe's a great fighter. I've got a lot of respect for him. He's done great things for GB Boxing, he's won the World [bronze] medal obviously. I sense the gap closing between us and I think it's going to be very competitive between me and him from now till April, because we're not interested in going to

IN CLARKE'S SHOES

the second or third qualifier. We both want to go to that first one. Because I believe whoever goes to that first qualifier, he will qualify.

Someone's going to get qualified and the other one, it's hard luck. He might be a little bit ahead on what he's done, and he's beat me. But I'm closing the gap all the time in the gym. I'm working very hard, under the radar.

How tough will it be, given the guys who have already qualified aren't necessarily the best in the world?

I boxed Eric Pfeiffer in the Brazil Test Event, he's a boxer that's already qualified [through AIBA Pro Boxing]. I beat him in the final and you think to yourself, 'There might be a few good talents that are going to miss out on an Olympic place.'

I think it's a shame myself and Joe are both from England, because I think if me and Joe went from two different countries and went to the Olympic Games, I believe we'd meet in the final. So I believe we've got the best two super-heavyweights in the world in me and Joe.

MISSION 2016

We pick out a boxer who's planning on making an impact this year

KATIE TAYLOR

OLYMPIC champion and five-time World gold medallist Katie Taylor will box in Ireland next month, ahead of the first 2016 Olympic qualification tournament in April. Taylor is slated to box on February 19 at the Dromtariffe Community Hall in Kanturk against Jelena Jelic, the Serbian who reached the quarter-finals of the European Games last year.

Taylor has ruled the lightweight division for the last decade. She is expected to win an Olympic place at the European qualification event, but between that and the Olympic Games in the summer, the World championships are due to take place in Kazakhstan in May. Taylor has had to contend with injuries, a wrist was troubling during her 2014 Worlds triumph. But the tournament this year would offer her the chance to win a record-breaking sixth World gold.



FAST FACTS

Age: 29

From: Ireland

Stances: Orthodox

Titles: Olympic gold, World gold x5, European gold x6

AMATEUR SCENE

The very best action, previews and news from Olympic-style boxing

With JOHN DENNEN | @BoxingNewsJD

SEND us your club's news, results or upcoming events to john.dennen@boxingnewsonline.net or 020 7618 3478

But look out for US prospect Shakur Stevenson, writes John Dennen

THE British Lionhearts began season six of the World Series of Boxing with an away win, beating the USA Knockouts at the Miccosukee Sports & Entertainment Dome in Miami.

GB light-flyweight **Harvey Horn** got his team off to the perfect start, outscoring American number one **Nico Hernandez** 48-47 for all three judges, winning the first three rounds before letting his opponent in during the last two sessions.

But America's **Shakur Stevenson**, a Youth World and Olympic gold medallist, looks like he'll make the transition to senior level and 56kgs with aplomb. He took on top-quality Briton **Peter McGrail** but put his handspeed and swift feet to work from the beginning. Stevenson countered his fellow southpaw with crisp left hands. McGrail managed to snag him with his cross and applied more pressure in the third round. But he couldn't unsettle Shakur. Stevenson remained continually elusive and brought in more hard lefts. The American won the five-rounder 50-44 and 50-45 twice.

Birtley light-welterweight **Pat McCormack** handled **Gary Russell**, from the famous fighting family (his older brother, also named Gary Russell, is the WBC featherweight champion). McCormack took the win 49-46, 49-45 and 48-47.

American middleweight **Charles Conway**, however, levelled the team match against **Troy Williamson**. The Briton took the second round off

Photos: WORLD SERIES OF BOXING



OKOLIE SEALS THE WIN

him but Conway caught Williamson with a hard cross and earned the decision 49-46 for all three judges.

With Guillermo Rigondeaux looking on from the crowd it all came down to the heavyweight clash between America's **Cam Awesome** and Britain's **Lawrence Okolie**. While the Londoner was going into his first WSB contest, Awesome, an experienced international, had come down from super-heavy. But Okolie, a newcomer to the GB team, scored an encouraging split decision win, 48-47 for two of the judges; the third had it by the same margin to Cam.

The next match for the British Lionhearts will be an away fixture

on Friday February 5 in Casablanca against the Morocco Atlas Lions. Their first home match will be against the Mexico Guerreros on Thursday

February 18 at York Hall in Bethnal Green. Tickets are available here: <http://tickets.sky.com/Boxing/World-Series-of-Boxing>.



QUALIFIER CHANGE

THE dates for the next major Rio 2016 qualification event have been changed. The European Olympic Qualifying Event will now take place from April 7-18 and the location has been switched to Samsun, on the shore of the Black Sea in Turkey. It had originally been scheduled for April 20-May 1 in Istanbul.

It's not the first time the timings for a big tournament in 2016 have been suddenly changed. The women's World championships, also an Olympic qualifier, was due to take

place in January but were pushed back to May 19-27. In fact, AIBA's reasoning for changing the European event was to provide more recovery time ahead of the upcoming qualifiers.

Speaking to *Boxing News* about the changed dates for the Worlds, GB performance director Rob McCracken said, "You've just got to adjust. If things move, they move. You get on with it, you regroup. It is what it is. It's moved, get on with it, deal with it and prepare for that. That's it and that's the outlook here."

CAMERON'S GOAL

NORTHAMPTON'S Chantelle Cameron returned to the Institute of Sport in Sheffield, after her seasonal break from training, sharp and refreshed. The 24-year-old Rio Olympic hopeful and present golden girl of GB Boxing trained throughout the holiday period and joined Kettering School of Boxing. After her impressive performance in winning gold at the Olympic Test Event in Rio de Janeiro last month, she has proved she is up there with the best.

She said, "With two qualifying tournaments in April and May left,

I need to do everything in my power to make sure I leave no stone unturned in my preparations. I don't want to seem big-headed, but I want to be the best I can, and being rated number three in the world isn't what I want, I want to be better."

On joining Clive Hogben's club, she said, "It all made sense and introduced me to some new tricks that I hadn't been exposed to."

"She is gifted, with good handspeed and a great engine," Hogben added.

With the rest of the GB women's team, Cameron is currently on a training camp with the USA in Colorado.

QUALITY BOUTS

The new English title belts prompt some entertaining match-ups



John Dennen
RINGSIDE

BETHNAL GREEN
JANUARY 24

THE series of shows encouraging the country's quality amateurs to box one another for new English title belts continues, with the latest taking place at York Hall. It delivered some cracking match-ups, culminating in a super-heavyweight rumble between Double Jab's **Jonathan Palata** and **Jeami Tshikeva**, of White Hart Lane. Heavy hooks reverberated off Tshikeva's body. Jeami didn't look like the biggest 91&kgs boxer, but he cranked up his workrate, rattled Palata, forced him to hold and won a deserved split decision after three rounds.

Gary Daley and Islington's **Sherif Musa** engaged in an exciting 91kgs clash. The Southend heavyweight warmed up as the first round progressed, pumping out his jab to keep the Londoner at bay and swinging his left hook through Musa's guard. But Sherif kept busy, working in volume and slashing his right over the top. Musa took a unanimous decision win and the vacant English heavyweight belt.

An excellent contest pitted the slick skills of Islington's **Cherrelle Brown** against the strength and focused aggression of the Army's Commonwealth medallist **Alana Murphy** at 64kgs. To open her account Brown sliced in jabs. Well-timed, her left hook struck Murphy's headguard. The shot, though, didn't shift her. While Brown controlled the first two rounds, Murphy came on strong in the last two, making it rough and forcing Cherrelle to backpedal. A tight contest but Alana couldn't celebrate her 100th bout with a win. The split decision went to Brown, a second title on the night for Islington.

Also at 64kgs, **Jacob Gabriel** couldn't quite bring his strength to bear against clever Eastern ABC

Photos: CHRIS BEVAN/BOXING ENGLAND



TOP TUSSLES:
Musa [right] rips an uppercut into Daley, while Eubank [below] swipes a left hook at Adenas

southpaw **Martin McDonagh**, who bounded forward with clusters of straight punches. In the second round, Gabriel crept on to the front foot and caught McDonagh with good left hooks. The Basingstoke man swung wildly in the third, fighting to hold on to his English title belt but he couldn't wrest control from Martin, who won the split decision.

The 49kgs titlist, Hooks' **Nathan Brook**, looked a classy operator as he outscored Shepshed's **Benn Norman**. He sprang around the outer fringes of the ring, landing long, accurate jabs, using his range well to record a unanimous decision.

There were a series of eliminators for title contests. Golden Ring light-heavyweight **Lewis Edmondson** marshalled **Dan Azeez**, of Essex University, with long one-tuos and took a split decision.

Fisher's well-supported 69kgs **Charlie Wynn** battled **Connor Vian** but didn't connect as cleanly as the Army man. Straight backhands lanced in and Vian won on a split.

Also at welterweight, Empire's **Jordan Cameron** began brightly against March's **Charlie Stevens**, stabbing down a straight cross. Stevens opened up with wild shots, but they hit home. The bout exploded in the second round as Charlie slammed his right into Cameron's jaw. Stevens fought through the last round and won a unanimous decision.

Brighton & Hove's **Harlem Eubank** is an entertaining prospect

at 64kgs. He cracked the incoming **Ahmed Adenas**, of Heart of Portsmouth, with left hooks, working well off the backfoot. The bout grew increasingly ill-tempered as Adenas bombed in close, but Eubank won this eliminator unanimously.

St. Mary's lightweight **Louise Orton** won a unanimous decision against Rumbles' **Amelie Massey**.

Sheffield Boxing Centre's **Tommy Frank** got a short-notice invite to box **Jack Smith**, of St. Ives, in a 52kgs eliminator. He took it up and won in style, picking up a unanimous decision.



ENGLAND vs NORWAY

It's five wins apiece as the two teams box in Oslo

AN England team took on Norway in Oslo on Saturday (January 23). Each side won five bouts, an encouraging result for a young England group with seven boxers having their first international contests.

Middleweight **Jordan Reynolds** took a split decision against home boxer **Martin Larsen**.

English heavyweight **Declan Fusco** won with the only stoppage of the day, halting **Armintas Dluckys** in two.

Alex Dickinson lost but did hold good Norwegian super-

heavyweight **Simen Nysaeter** to a split decision.

English 64kgs **Billy Pickles** lost a split decision to **Hadi Srour**, while welterweight **Tommy Beaney** picked up a victory in an England vest, beating **Salavat Khatuev** on a split decision.

OTHER RESULTS (ENGLAND FIRST):

54: Kim Shannon outp'd by MARIELLE HANSEN unan. **60:** Thomas Hodgson outp'd by BERNARD ANGELO TORRES unan. **69:** JOE LAWS outp'd Jamshid Nazari split. **75:** John Marvin outp'd by SURKHO SHAMILOV unan. **81:** HARRY WOODS outp'd Islam Ismailov split.

Photo: AL BELLO/ALLSPORT/GETTY IMAGES



STUNNER:
Randall wrecks
Chavez's unbeaten
run at the MGM
Grand in Las Vegas



MGM GRAND OPENING

Chavez meets
Randall in
venue's first
show, writes
Daniel
Herbert

THE MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas has hosted more big boxing shows than any other venue over the last two decades, yet 22 years ago it was a brand-new arena.

Its first show, set for January 29, 1994, saw Mexican superstar Julio Cesar Chavez defend his WBC super-lightweight title against American Frankie Randall, and Claude Abrams previewed the bill.

Claude wrote that Chavez was continuing his quest "to retire undefeated in 100 fights", having conceded just one draw in 91 outings by that stage. Randall represented the Mexican's 24th world title fight across three weight divisions (130lbs, 135lbs, 140lbs) and his sixth WBC super-light defence.

Randall, while 32, was having his first world title fight, although we noted that

the Tennessee puncher "has been largely avoided with noteworthy victories over world champions in Freddie Pendleton and Edwin Rosario."

In picking Chavez to win, we said that although Frankie was on a winning run, "he does have vulnerabilities and has fallen apart before." Yet Randall would pull off a shock split decision victory, flooring Chavez on the way.

WAYNE MAKES WAVES

WAYNE McCULLOUGH won bantamweight silver for Ireland at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and 18 months into his pro career was already making good progress.

We reported how he won the vacant North American Boxing Federation 118lb title by stopping Javier Medina in the seventh of a scheduled 12-rounder at the Civic Auditorium in Omaha, Nebraska of all places.

Originally from Belfast, Wayne was fighting out of Las Vegas, where he was trained by the

highly respected Eddie Futch and Thell Torrance. His growing reputation meant that over 2,000 fans filled the venue on a night when temperatures plummeted to 10 below zero.

McCullough was 11-0 (9) going in and Medina 9-0-1 (5), but it proved one-sided as McCullough, "the human threshing machine", wore him down. Referee Ron Stander, who challenged Joe Frazier for the world heavyweight title in 1972, eventually rescued poor Puerto Rican Medina at 2-44.

CLASSIC IN CARDIFF

A BIG show in Cardiff saw Swansea's Floyd Havard retire after six rounds of an IBF super-featherweight title challenge to classy Puerto Rican John John Molina, but down the bill was a cracking super-lightweight affair.

A British super-lightweight title eliminator ended in round seven when Portsmouth's Mickey Driscoll crumbled against Bristolian Ross Hale, who thus clinched a shot at Liverpool's Lonsdale Belt-holder Andy Holligan.

We called it "a terrific win in a

wild slugfest" and doubted there would be "a better domestic fight for the rest of the year," even though 1994 was only three weeks old.

Driscoll set a ferocious pace and put his southpaw opponent under pressure, "before tiredness caused his hands to drop slightly and allowed Hale to find a way through."

Mickey now coaches the England schoolboy squad, and his son Charlie has just turned pro with Frank Warren.

HOW WINSTONE GOT HIS CAULIFLOWER



Alex Daley

@thealexdaley

**Historian
& author**

CARDIFF'S Gordon Blakey was a stylish boxer but also loved a tear-up, and gave fans value for money. When Blakey tackled unbeaten prospect Howard Winstone in March 1960, *Boxing News* called the fight "the best feathers dust-up in years".

This tells you something about Blakey's fighting ability, as Winstone was one of Britain's greats. Although Winstone eventually

won a world title, for the rest of his life he carried a reminder of his fight with Gordon.

"I gave him his cauliflower ear," Gordon reveals, "and every time I saw him after that he'd jokingly hold up his ear and call me a name."

Gordon describes his fight with Winstone as "a hard fight, a very good fight. He swelled up my eye and they stopped it after the eighth round."

Born in Cardiff in August 1937, Blakey started boxing aged seven or eight and had an amateur career filled with fights. He boxed for various clubs before winning ABA Youth titles with Roath Youth in 1953 and '54. A notable early scalp was future British welterweight champ Brian Curvis, but Gordon modestly plays this down. "I'm not bragging about that - I was only a youngster when I beat him."

In 1955, Gordon won the Welsh bantamweight title, plus the Army Cadet (Class C) bantam crown, but he broke his jaw when boxing for Britain against the USSR, fighting the much older Boris Stepanov. Later that year he entered the Army for national service. In 1957, he won the British Army lightweight title but was beaten in the ISBA championships by Johnny Kidd.

"I beat some good fighters as an amateur," Gordon recalls. "Len 'Luggie' Reece, Reggie Perry, Peter Delbridge, Dai Merchant."

Before his pro debut in August 1957, a Cardiff businessmen's club held a presentation night in Gordon's honour, such was his popularity in the city. That evening the legendary Jimmy Wilde presented him with a green satin dressing gown embroidered with his name, which Gordon proudly wore throughout his pro career.



LOCAL HERO:
Blakey is one of
Cardiff's favourite
boxing sons

He recalls: "Although I had a few different offers, I turned professional with Benny Jacobs. Joe Erskine was with him and I'd always liked Jacobs - he was a hell of a boy and a comedian as well - a good fella."

Popular Cardiff featherweight Gordon Blakey gave famed countryman Howard an eternal reminder of their gory and gruelling March 1960 tear-up

Boxing manager and bookmaker Benny was one of the game's most colourful characters and had a highly successful Cardiff stable.

"Our gym was in Custom House Street," Gordon tells me. "There was a fruit store on the ground floor, Benny's betting shop was above that and the gym was on the top floor. There were some good fighters up there - Joe Erskine, Phil Edwards, Harry Carroll, Teddy Best, Darkie Hughes, Eddie Bee, Ronnie Rush and Lennie 'The Lion' Williams. You couldn't start training at Benny's gym until the last race, which was at 4 or 5 o'clock!"

Boxing pro between 1957 and '61, Gordon notched up 22 wins and eight losses, but was forced to retire by eye problems at age 23.

His only obvious career regret stems from a fight with Terry Rees for the vacant Welsh featherweight title in 1959. Gordon was disqualified for an alleged low blow while in the lead, but he maintains the punch was fair. "I was champion of Wales as an amateur and I think I would have been as a pro, apart from that," he opines.

After retiring, Gordon continued to work as a coal merchant in partnership with his father, as he had done since turning pro. Today he is a highly esteemed member of the Welsh EBA.

EX-BOXER ASSOCIATION NEWS

British EBA Hall of Fame inductees

THE 2016 inductees into the British Ex-Boxers' Association Hall of Fame (as voted for by EBAs throughout Britain) are as follows.

Pioneer 1880-1949: Jimmy Wilde; Posthumous Boxer: Howard Winstone; Early Modern Era: Terry Downes; Modern Era: Ken Buchanan MBE, John H. Stracey, Bunny Johnson and Ricky Hatton; Hundred Plus Club: Ray Fallone; Amateur Boxer: Dick McTaggart; Lifetime Services to Boxing and EBAs: Jack and Mary Powell (posthumous), Frank O'Sullivan MBE, John Oliver and Tommy

Mulholland; Manager/Promoter: Paddy Byrne, Ron Gray and Andy Smith (posthumous); Trainer: Jim McDonnell.

The award ceremony will be held on September 18, 2016 at The Azur, The Marina, St Leonards-on-Sea from midday. Tickets are £30 each and include a three-course dinner and entertainment. For more details please contact Carole Hooker on 07948 611 444 or caroleandmartin27@btinternet.com.

Email exboxers@gmail.com with your ex-boxer association news.

MILES SHINKWIN

Andrew Fairley talks to a fan of 'Del Boy' and 'Rodders'

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/JED LEICESTER

When and why you started boxing:

My dad, uncles and nine cousins all boxed. My dad then became a coach at the local boxing club, and I started training properly at around seven years old.

Favourite all-time fighter:

Sugar Ray Leonard. He had skill and speed, he could fight and box, and he could dig deep when it mattered most. Pernell Whitaker is a very close second.

Best fight you've seen:

For pure entertainment, it's hard to find a better fight than Marvin Hagler-Thomas Hearns [a third-session stoppage win for Hagler in April 1985]. I love Hagler-Leonard too [a 12-round split verdict victory for Leonard in April 1987].

Personal career highlight:

Being made the mandatory challenger for the British light-heavy title after only 12 pro fights.

Toughest opponent:

Demetrius Andrade in the amateurs. I lost 18-16 to him on points in the Junior Olympic semi-final. He was very sharp, awkward and difficult to tag clean.

Best and worst attributes as a boxer:

Strengths? Maybe my opponents would be better answering that. As for weaknesses, nobody has found one yet!

Training tip:

Don't concern yourself with what your opponent is doing in training. Just get yourself in the best shape possible.

Favourite meal/restaurant:

A good home-cooked roast dinner from my wife.

Best friends in boxing:

My trainer Jason Rowland, my strength and conditioning



'ANDRADE WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO TAG CLEAN'

coach Joe Reemer, my manager Richard Clark, and all the boys in the gym.

Other sportsman you would like to be:

A basketball player. Past: Michael Jordan. Present: LeBron James.

Last film/TV show you saw:

Only Fools and Horses is on continually in my house.

Who would play you in a film of your life:

I'd love to say Leonardo DiCaprio, but I'm not sure people would buy that!

Have you ever been starstruck:

When I met Gennady Golovkin out in Big Bear, California while I was on a training camp with George Groves.

Last time you cried:

When my little daughter, Neave, was born last year.

Best advice received:

Give life everything you've got, and have no regrets.

Worst rumour about yourself:

I take no notice of rumours.

Something not many people know about you:

I go to church at least once a fortnight.

FAST FACTS

Age: 27 Twitter: @milesinkwin Nickname: n/a Height: 6ft

Nationality: English From: Bushey Stance: Orthodox Record: 12-0 (6)

Division: Light-heavyweight Titles: Southern Area & International Masters Bronze

Next fight: The BBBofC recently announced that Shinkwin will contest the vacant British light-heavyweight belt against Hosea Burton by the end of May.

[NEXT ISSUE ON SALE FEBRUARY 2, 2016 (DIGITAL) AND FEBRUARY 4, 2016 (PRINT)]

ESTABLISHED 1909 BOXING NEWS 30 Cannon St, London, EC4M 6YJ

TEL +44(0)20 7618 extension EMAIL firstname.surname@boxingnewsnewsonline.net FAX 020 7618 3400 SUBSCRIPTIONS 01371 851 888 EMAIL boxingnews@escosubs.co.uk

PUBLISHING MANAGER Danny Flexen 3098 EDITOR Matt Christie 3069 ART EDITOR & SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER Nick Bond 3071 ONLINE EDITOR John Dennen 3478

ASSISTANT EDITOR Paul Wheeler 3401 INTERN George Gigney 3072 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER Zoltan Nagy 3471 BN SHOP Patricia Applewhaite 3411 CREATIVE ARTWORKER

Jason Swift DIGITAL MARKETING ASSISTANT Tanika Callum 3472 PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Alex McLachlan 3077 MANAGING DIRECTOR Tim Whitehouse PRINTING Warners Midlands Plc

Regd. at the Post Office as a newspaper | Published by Newsquest Specialist Media Ltd - a Gannett Company | Newsquest Media Group, Loudwater Mill, Station Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP10 9TY

Distributed by Seymour Distribution Ltd, 86 Newman St, London, W1T 3EX T 020 7396 8000

BOXING NEWS

NEWSQUEST
Specialist Media

recycle
When you have finished with
this magazine please recycle it.

ABC

Boxing News is audited by the
Audit Bureau of Circulation.

f

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/boxingnewsnewsonline

Incorporating
FIGHTINGFIT

TAKE OUT A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE WORLD'S BEST FIGHT MAGAZINE



++ SAVE UP TO £66 ON THE NEWSSTAND PRICE ++

+ GET THE ANNUAL 2016 FREE



CALL 01371 851888 QUOTE ANNUAL16 OR VISIT
www.boxingnewsonline.net/ANNUAL16

Terms and Conditions:

This offer is only available to new Boxing News subscribers on a 1-year subscription (£97.50). Subscribers will receive the Boxing News 2016 Annual. This offer is not available to digital edition subscribers. Boxing News accepts no responsibility for any damage, loss, liabilities or disappointment incurred or suffered by a customer as a result of claiming the offer. If the subscription that you purchased includes a free gift, please allow up to 4 weeks for delivery. For all enquiries email: boxingnews@escosubs.co.uk or call 01371 851888. Offer available whilst stocks last.



AN EVENING WITH BOXING LEGEND

FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR

• AFTER DINNER SPEECH • Q&A • PHOTOS • MEMORABILIA •
• MASTER OF CEREMONIES • COMEDIAN •

* ALSO FEATURING FORMER WORLD CHAMPION *

**RICHIE
WOODHALL**



The Former
WBC Super Middleweight
Champion of the World

FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY

DOORS OPEN 6.00PM

VOX CENTRE BIRMINGHAM

RESORTS WORLD, NEC BIRMINGHAM

CALL THE TICKET FACTORY

0844 338 8000

OR CALL BAR SPORT PROMOTIONS: 01543 572 092

BRONZE £99

REAR SEATING • NO MEAL

SILVER £299

CENTRE SEATING • MEAL • PHOTO

GOLD £550

FRONT ROW • MEAL • PHOTO • VIP PACKAGE

VIP SPONSORSHIP ALSO AVAILABLE
(INCLUDES PHOTO AND MEAL)



CASINO • BARS • RESTAURANTS • CINEMA • HOTEL